ISSUE 207 | OCTOBER 2012

# DUNGEON

A Dungeons & Dragons® Roleplaying Game Supplement

# DUNGEON®

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# All Together Now

*By Christopher Perkins*

We're trying an experiment this month.

Instead of releasing subscriber content in dribs and drabs throughout the month, we're packaging all of the *Dungeon* ezine content into a single PDF. The same is true for this month's *Dragon* content. We've done our own assessment of the pros and cons, but we're more interested in hearing what *you* think. Feel free to leave a comment or email us at DnDInsider@wizards.com.

If we continue bundling ezine content in this fashion, rest assured that the amount of subscriber content we're releasing will not change. We aim for roughly 55,000 words per month across the two ezines. This month we're a bit on the heavy side because we have two meaty adventures tied to our October theme, which is (appropriately enough) "scary things."

One of this month's ghoulish offerings is an adventure inspired by the classic Gothic horror module I6 *Ravenloft*™ and the 2nd Edition Ravenloft® campaign setting. "Fair Barovia" came about because we had an illustration by Jesper Ejsing and a handful of maps left over from a product that never saw the light of day. We sent Jesper's illo and the maps to freelance writer Claudio Pozas, and asked him what he could make out of them.

Claudio's first draft of "Fair Barovia" answered the question of what happens to a domain of dread once its darklord is destroyed, but ultimately we decided that the adventure would be stronger if Count Strahd von Zarovich was still alive and kicking—okay, maybe not alive, but not dead either. The final version included here puts the heroes and Strahd on the same side, which is an entirely different (and very intriguing) twist. If you've never heard of Strahd, check out this month's issue of *Dragon*, which includes a History Check article about the nefarious vampire lord.

Our other big adventure this month is "Starhaunt," a creepy tale about a remote observatory invaded by star spawn. The adventure has the feel of an old-school dungeon crawl as the heroes make their way through Starhaunt Observatory in search of a missing sage and a magical astrolabe called the *eye of Allabar*. The villains are astronomers who've been corrupted by the evil they sought to protect the world against, and they're a truly menacing and horrific lot. Craig Campbell created some wonderful maps of the fortress-observatory, and cartographer Mike Schley made them look beautiful, as always. I've always been a fan of location-based adventures with lots of rooms to explore, and "Starhaunt" contains more than its share of grisly surprises!

Rounding out the issue is a new domain of dread called Timbergorge, which is ruled by a malevolent treant. If you're looking for a Halloween-themed setting, consider sending your player characters to the Shadowfell to face the treant on his home turf. The image of characters being chased through moldering woods by an incensed treant is pretty scary stuff, and certainly appropriate for the Halloween season.

# Starhaunt

**A D&D® adventure for characters of levels 15-17**

*By Craig Campbell and Christopher Perkins*

*Illustrations by Tyler Walpole and Craig J Spearing*

*Cartography by Mike Schley*

Established by the warlock Thulzar and manned by the Order of the Endless Night, the fortress observatory of Starhaunt was once a guard post holding the line against the baleful stars that inhabit the night sky. The order kept a vigilant eye on these menacing stars, watching for any sign of their evil influence and preparing to push back extraterrestrial invaders.

As these astronomers kept watch, the dark stars eventually took notice of them. Three of the stars—Acamar, Hadar, and Gibbeth—began speaking to the astronomers and, in time, corrupted their souls. Gradually, they transformed the order into a cult of evil star-worshipers. The Order of the Endless Night, driven insane, await the night when their fell star-patrons will come to the world to usher in the end times. Until then, with the help of an evil star named Allabar, they've begun summoning powerful aberrant beings to the observatory using rituals and sacrifices. As evil star powers send their spawn to the world, it falls to the adventurers to put a stop to this invasion.

Before running the adventure, you should review the "star spawn" entries in *Monster Manual® 2* and *Monster Manual 3* to acquaint yourself with this diverse category of monsters and the stars they worship.

## Background

One cannot study the stars and not be studied by them. The Order of the Endless Night was corrupted by this dark truth, and now its members have gone mad and pledged their lives to Acamar, Hadar, and Gibbeth. Fortunately for the rest of the world, these evil entities are trapped in their stars and cannot escape unaided. One evil star roams free, however—Allabar, the Opener of the Way (*Monster Manual 3*, pages 186-187).

About a year ago, Allabar sent the Order of the Endless Night a gift. A small meteorite fell from the night sky and struck the observatory, damaging it but inflicting no casualties. Members of the order recovered the meteorite from the wreckage and cracked it open, revealing an orb-shaped astrolabe at its core—the *eye of Allabar*. With it, they can predict when Allabar will come into conjunction with other evil stars, and during these events they can offer up sacrifices to the evil star powers and bring their star spawn emissaries to the world.

It takes time for Allabar to arrange these conjunctions. Thus, they are rare. The *eye of Allabar* tells the Order of the Endless Night when a conjunction is imminent, allowing time for its members to secure appropriate sacrifices—ones who were born under particular stars at particular times. The leaders of the order receive names in their dreams at night, and

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they set about locating and capturing these individuals, bringing them to the observatory, and sacrificing them on the rooftop of their tower observatory. Each batch of sacrifices allows a new star spawn to slip into the world.

There will come a dark and terrible night when Allabar is in conjunction with all three dread stars at the same time. The Order of the Endless Night believes this event will allow Acamar, Hadar, and Gibbeth to break free of their celestial prisons and visit destruction upon the world. By the time this event comes to pass, the order will have summoned a veritable army of star spawn. That event could be months if not years away, and so the order maintains a low profile and keeps the star spawn emissaries confined to Starhaunt Observatory.

The order's abductions, however, did not go unnoticed. An elderly sage and astronomer named Merik observed the recent conjunctions (five in the past year) and, over a period of several months, connected multiple disappearances to each event. Sensing that evil was afoot, he tried to warn local authorities, but his ramblings about "evil star powers" were quickly dismissed. That's when he decided to make an arduous trek to Starhaunt Observatory, to consult with the Order of the Endless Night, unaware that the order is behind the dark events he seeks to shed light on. He never returned.

A longtime friend and acquaintance of Merik's, Ansel Driscus, is a priest of Erathis in a major city. Merik spoke to him of his intention to visit Starhaunt Observatory. Ansel advised against such a long journey, given Merik's age, but he could not discourage the old man from his pilgrimage. For the past several nights, Ansel has been haunted by nightmares, and after praying to Erathis, he believes Merik to be in great peril. Unable to leave his temple, the priest approaches the adventurers for help.

# Synopsis

Ansel Driscus, a humble priest of Erathis, asks the characters to follow the old sage's trail to Starhaunt Observatory and make sure Merik is well. Ansel fears that Merik might be in danger and tells the characters what Merik told him about the connection between a number of disappearances and some odd alignments of stars.

The characters arrive at Starhaunt Observatory, a fortress atop a rocky crag in the wilderness, far from civilization. Most of the adventure takes place here. The Order of the Endless Night tries to turn visitors away, claiming that Merik never arrived, but something is clearly amiss. The characters enter Starhaunt. As they explore the ancient fortress in search of Merik, they encounter aberrant monsters and learn more of the order's secrets.

Members of the order are preparing for another conjunction, this one between Allabar and Gibbeth. If the characters act quickly, they can save the lives of four innocent people "destined" to be sacrificed to bring a new scion of Gibbeth into the world.

## Treasure

Characters who face all the threats of Starhaunt are likely to gain a level, or nearly so. The adventure includes minimal treasure, which should be treated as extra loot rather than included in your treasure allocation. Even the *eye of Allabar* can be treated as an extra item, unless the object will never cause trouble for its user in your campaign. You should place treasure for a whole level of adventuring according to the needs of your campaign. Areas particularly good for treasure placement include the armory (11), the storage room (15), the kitchen (16), the parlor (18), the reliquary (20), the library (23), the sacristy (29), the temple (30), and the meeting room (39).

### The Baleful Stars

The stars and star spawn at the heart of this adventure are described in *Monster Manual 2* (all except Allabar) and *Monster Manual 3*. A synopsis of each is provided here.

Acamar is a black star that devours other stars it comes in contact with. The star spawn known as maws of Acamar serve as the star's emissaries. They draw every creature they come near into their black forms, sending the hapless victims to be torn apart in Acamar's endless darkness. Vaden, a brazen human male, is the voice of Acamar within the Order of the Endless Night.

Hadar is a dull red star that is dying. Its spawn, the heralds of Hadar, come to the world to feed on the life energy of those they kill, thus prolonging Hadar's life. The voice of Hadar within the Order of the Endless Night is Linza, a female tiefling who secretly seeks to overthrow her leader, Ilshaeren.

Gibbeth is a green star with an unknowable being at its core. This being carries an eternal curse that will drive everyone who sees its true form mad when the end times come. A scion of Gibbeth is this being's presence made manifest in the world. An elderly eladrin named Ilshaeren is the voice of Gibbeth, and he leads the Order of the Endless Night.

Allabar, unlike its kin, freely wanders the night sky. The Opener of the Way is determined to set into motion events that could enable Acamar, Hadar, and Gibbeth to destroy the world, using the Order of the Endless Night as their instrument. Allabar does not send emissaries to the world, but it does whisper to the leaders of the order, speaking the names of those who must be sacrificed. It has also provided them with the tools they need to bring about their own—and the world's—destruction.

# Starting the Adventure

Ansel Driscus reaches out to the adventurers, having heard of their great deeds. One of the characters might know of Ansel through a mutual acquaintance. Alternatively, you can have Ansel revere a deity more relevant to the adventurers.

The meeting with Ansel can occur anywhere—at his temple in the city, at the party's preferred hangout, or some neutral location.

**When you're ready to begin, read:**

*Father Ansel Driscus, who by all accounts is a respected priest of Erathis, has asked you to meet him. When you do, Ansel's grizzled face is etched with concern. "I am worried about an old friend of mine, a sage named Merik. He and I have known each other for years. Three weeks ago, he came to me quite rattled, saying that he had discovered a connection between a number of unexplained disappearances and some astronomical alignments. Merik's an astronomer, you see."*

*The priest glances up toward the heavens and shifts uneasily. "Merik went to the local authorities, but they didn't take him seriously. Even if they had, I fear there was precious little to act on. Merik had remarked that the disappearances occurred on the same nights as . . . let me see if I can get this right . . . conjunctions of evil stars. Yes, I believe that's how he phrased it.*

*"Merik spoke of a wandering star, which he had been tracking. Each time it came into alignment with another evil star, handfuls of people throughout the countryside vanished. Merik decided to consult with the Order of the Endless Night, a group of learned astronomers at a remote fortress observatory. He promptly set out on his journey, against my recommendation. He was in poor health, you see, and I feared the trip would weaken him further. But Merik was resolved, and he promised to write me a letter upon his arrival. Yet I have heard nothing."*

*Ansel presents a folded-up scrap of parchment. "Merik gave me this . . . the names of the stars and the date of each conjunction he managed to record."*

The parchment bears the following script, written in Merik's trembling hand.

*Allabar and Hadar—8th month, 16th day*
*Allabar and Acamar—10th month, 5th day*
*Allabar and Gibbeth—1st month, 9th day*
*Allabar and Hadar—4th month, 22nd day*
*Allabar and Acamar—7th month, 3rd day*
*I must speak to Ilshaeren at Starhaunt Observatory! Pray for me, Ansel. Pray for us all!*

Ansel points out (as Merik did to him) that the disappearances occurred in the days leading up to these dates, and then ended abruptly when the conjunction occurred.

Ansel knows that someone named Ilshaeren is a member of the Order of the Endless Night. In terms of reward, the priest has little to offer but his gratitude and the future assistance of his temple.

**If the characters agree to help, read:**

*"There is one more thing," says Father Ansel. "For the past three nights, I've been plagued with nightmares, the details of which are lost to me save for one indelible sound—that of poor Merik screaming in the dark. I pray it is not some dark omen."*

The adventurers receive the following quest.

**MAJOR QUEST: RESCUE THE OLD SAGE**
**16th-level Major Quest (1,400 XP/character)**

The characters earn this quest reward if they rescue Merik and see him safely home.

# What the Characters Know

Players can make skill checks to determine what their characters have heard about Starhaunt Observatory, the Order of the Endless Night, the star names written on Ansel's scrap of parchment, and the disappearances that occurred leading up to each of those recorded dates.

## Dungeoneering

**DC 15:** The night sky is full of baleful stars that gaze upon the world with hatred and envy. Many warlocks and nihilistic cults are drawn to their power.

**DC 22:** Hadar is a dying ember of a star, while Acamar is a dead "corpse star" that devours anything that gets too close. Gibbeth is a green star said to have at its core some dreadful entity. Allabar, unlike these other stars, wanders the night sky freely and uses its power to create strife in the world.

**DC 30:** When Allabar is in conjunction with evil stars such as Acamar, Hadar, and Gibbeth, it can cause portals to open and spew emissaries of these dire stars into the world. These "star spawn" exist to corrupt, mislead, and destroy.

## History

**DC 15:** The Order of the Endless Night has existed for nearly a hundred years and is composed of like-minded warlocks and astronomers who have pledged to protect the world from the evil stars and their spawn.

**DC 22:** Thulzar, a human warlock, founded the Order of the Endless Night and financed the construction of Starhaunt, the group's fortress observatory.

**DC 30:** Thulzar disappeared a few years after the founding of Starhaunt. One rumor is that he succumbed to madness and was driven out, but the more likely story is that he left on some great adventure and never returned. An eladrin warlock named Ilshaeren took over when Thulzar left and has led the order ever since.

## NEW STAR SPAWN

This adventure introduces two new varieties of star spawn, the star beckoner and the star wisp, which the characters will encounter several times.

**Star Beckoner:** A star beckoner is born when a humanoid creature undergoes a heinous transformation ritual beneath the light of a baleful star. Once the process is complete, it cannot be undone. The creature becomes a lurching mass of black tentacles with a humanoid shape. This new form gives the creature the power it needs to fulfill the mad dreams of its patron star.

*Caller of Wisps:* A star beckoner can call upon its patron star to send forth pinpoints of starlight known as star wisps. These bright minions eagerly obey the beckoner's commands.

**Star Wisp:** Easily mistaken for will-o'-wisps, star wisps are miniscule fragments of evil stars sent to the world to help bring about its end. Being so far from their parent star makes them frail, however.

*Harbingers of the End Time:* Star beckoners and star wisps are intelligent, malevolent creatures with a hatred of all things natural. They gladly work with other aberrant monsters that share their apocalyptic desires.

### Streetwise

**DC 15:** In the past year, there have been several unexplained disappearances throughout the land. The victims came from all walks of life, lived far from one another, and did not vanish all at once. Local authorities were quick to blame the incidents on such common threats as monsters, cultists, or slavers, but no evidence has been proffered to corroborate any of these theories.

**DC 22:** In the village of Cragfoot, a farmer reported seeing a cloaked dragonborn on a black horse racing across his field at dusk. He reported the sighting after hearing that a young girl had disappeared later that evening.

**DC 30:** A wizard who was exploring the sudden disappearance of his apprentice told authorities that the youngster had been born "under a bad star." The apprentice was never found.

# Events

The following episodes can occur anywhere within Starhaunt. Use the guidance each event provides to help you decide when to employ it.

## Event 1: Hall Guardians

**Combat Encounter Level Varies**

Invisible star wisps wander the halls of the fortress observatory, keeping an eye out for trouble. Use this event to punctuate a series of exploration encounters.

**Monsters:** 1 star wisp plus reinforcements.

**When a star wisp appears, read:**

*A sinister wisp of light appears out of nowhere, attacks with a lance of starlight, and disappears just as suddenly.*

### Tactics

The wisp ends its *darken* effect, attacks, and uses *darken* again before the characters know what hit them. If it's not destroyed, it remains invisible, moves silently away, and returns 1 minute later with reinforcements (roll on the following table).

**REINFORCEMENTS**

| d6 | Monsters |
|---|---|
| 1-3 | 4 star wisps |
| 4-5 | 4 starwarped initiates |
| 6 | 1 star beckoner |

**Star Wisp** **Level 16 Minion Skirmisher**
Small aberrant magical beast XP 350, or 0 if called by a star beckoner

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +17
**AC** 30, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 27 **Perception** +6
**Speed** 0, fly 6 (hover; altitude limit 2) Darkvision
**Immune** radiant

**Traits**

**Luminous**
While not invisible, the wisp sheds bright light out to 10 squares.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Star Burn** (radiant) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +19 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 12 radiant damage.

**Minor Actions**

**Darken** ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* The wisp becomes invisible until it takes a minor action to end the effect. While invisible, the wisp cannot attack.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 2 (+4) | **Dex** 24 (+15) | **Wis** 6 (+6) |
| **Con** 20 (+13) | **Int** 3 (+4) | **Cha** 21 (+13) |

**Alignment** evil **Languages** –

**Starwarped Initiate** **Level 15 Minion Brute**
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 300

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +9
**AC** 27, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 27 **Perception** +11
**Speed** 6

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Conjured Star Mace** (radiant, weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 14 radiant damage.

⊛ **Eldritch Bolt** (force, implement) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 14 force damage.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 11 (+7) | **Dex** 15 (+9) | **Wis** 9 (+6) |
| **Con** 16 (+10) | **Int** 10 (+7) | **Cha** 15 (+9) |

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common
**Equipment** robes, rod

**Star Beckoner** **Level 16 Elite Soldier**
Medium aberrant humanoid XP 2,800

**HP** 320; **Bloodied** 160 **Initiative** +15
**AC** 32, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 28 **Perception** +11
**Speed** 6 Darkvision
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

**Threatening Reach**
The beckoner can make opportunity attacks against enemies within 2 squares of it.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Tentacle** ✦ **At-Will**
*Requirement:* The beckoner must have fewer than two creatures grabbed.
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +21 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d10 + 13 damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 22) until the end of the beckoner's next turn.
*Sustain Minor:* One of the beckoner's grabs persists, and the creature on which the grab persists takes 2d10 + 13 damage.

**Tentacle Flurry** ✦ **At-Will**
*Requirement:* The beckoner must have no creature grabbed.
*Effect:* The beckoner uses *tentacle* twice.

**Star Wisps** ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞

*Effect:* The beckoner calls forth up to three star wisps, which appear within 5 squares of the beckoner and act immediately after it in the initiative order. The star wisps remain until destroyed or until the beckoner takes a minor action to dispel them. A beckoner can have no more than three star wisps present at a given time.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 21 (+13) | **Dex** 21 (+13) | **Wis** 7 (+6) |
| **Con** 24 (+15) | **Int** 4 (+5) | **Cha** 22 (+14) |

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech

# Event 2: More Sacrifices

**Combat Encounter Level 11 (3,200 XP)**

With the next conjunction of Allabar and Gibbeth approaching, members of the order are returning to Starhaunt with captives.

**Monsters:** 2 starwarped sentinels.

**Other Creatures:** 2 prisoners; also 2 horses if the event occurs in the outer yard near the gatehouse.

The sentinels call for Nerielle (see area 1) to open the portcullis. If no one is at the gatehouse, the sentinels teleport into the courtyard, then open the gate themselves. After placing their horses in the stables, they lead the two prisoners into the fortress. If the characters have left a trail of bodies, the sentinels are on guard as they make their way toward the prison. If something draws them away, they investigate cautiously while keeping their prisoners close.

This encounter can add some drama to any return to the fortress's outer yard or can play out in the courtyard when the characters are in an adjoining area. Since the sentinels move through the observatory to get to the prison, they could be encountered anywhere.

## Prisoners

Each captive's wrists are bound behind his back with rope. Each prisoner has defenses 10, 1 hit point, and no effective attacks. These prisoners have the same birthday as those that are already confined in the starlight prison (area 35).

- ✦ Klar, a 17-year-old male half-orc ne'er-do-well with a chip on his shoulder
- ✦ Elwin Xanderos, a 31-year-old male half-elf street performer who thinks he can talk his way out of anything

## Tactics

If they are outnumbered, the starwarped sentinels retreat to area 34 or some other location where they can gather allies or better defend themselves. If they are pinned down, they threaten to kill the prisoners unless the adventurers allow them to reach the prison. If the characters agree to these terms, the sentinels lead them to area 34, where they hope Korev is waiting.

| **2 Starwarped Sentinels** | **Level 17 Skirmisher** |
|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | XP 1,600 each |
| **HP** 160; **Bloodied** 80 | **Initiative** +17 |
| **AC** 31, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 28 | **Perception** +12 |
| **Speed** 6 | |
| **Traits** | |
| **Evasive** | |
| The sentinel gains a +5 power bonus to all defenses while moving on its turn. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Morningstar** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +22 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 2d10 + 14 damage, plus 2d8 damage if the target is granting combat advantage to the sentinel. | |
| ➳ **Crossbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 15 (one creature); +22 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 2d8 + 13 damage. | |
| ✧ **Starlight Blink** (radiant, teleportation) ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞ | |
| *Effect:* The sentinel teleports up to 5 squares and makes the following attack. | |
| *Attack:* Close burst 1 (enemies in the burst); +20 vs. Fortitude | |
| *Hit:* 2d12 + 12 radiant damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). | |
| **Skills** Stealth +20 | |
| **Str** 21 (+13) **Dex** 24 (+15) **Wis** 8 (+7) | |
| **Con** 16 (+11) **Int** 11 (+8) **Cha** 18 (+12) | |
| **Alignment** evil **Languages** Common | |
| **Equipment** leather armor, morningstar, crossbow, 20 bolts | |

# Event 3: Voice of Acamar

**Combat Encounter Level 17 (8,600 XP)**

The characters encounter Vaden, one of the leaders of the order, and his entourage.

**Monsters:** Vaden (voice of Acamar), 1 maw of Acamar, 3 abyssal ghouls.

**Read:**

*A sinister retinue approaches, led by three slavering ghouls. Behind them walks a human male dressed in a robe, his eyes empty black voids, and a lithe, 10-foot-tall giant that looks like it's made of liquid night. It wears tattered robes over its inscrutable form.*

Vaden spends all hours wandering Starhaunt and contemplating an alliance with Linza against Ilshaeren to get the *eye of Allabar* away from his master. He is looking for guidance from Acamar before committing to such a course.

**Lore:** Vaden came to Starhaunt nineteen years ago as a young astronomer full of pride at having discovered a comet. He was eager to join the Order of Endless Night. Ilshaeren took Vaden as a pupil and tried to temper the young man's pride, to no avail. With each new discovery, Vaden became more arrogant. Ilshaeren eventually gave up trying to humble Vaden and instead challenged him by giving him leadership responsibilities. Before the madness overcame him, Vaden was responsible for the day-to-day running and maintenance of the observatory and worked closely with Captain Korev.

Vaden keeps the maw of Acamar nearby to prevent any damage it might do if left on its own. He created the ghouls from the corpses of former members entombed in the catacombs (area 19).

The voice of Acamar is unlikely to talk to intruders. He and his lackeys fight to the death.

**Treasure:** Vaden carries the key to the hollow doors that lead to area 20.

| **Voice of Acamar** | **Level 17 Elite Brute** |
|---|---|
| Medium aberrant humanoid | XP 3,200 |
| **HP** 400; **Bloodied** 200 | **Initiative** +9 |
| **AC** 29, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 30 | **Perception** +9 |
| **Speed** 6 | Darkvision |
| **Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1 | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Touch of Madness** (psychic) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +20 vs. Will | |
| *Hit:* 3d10 + 15 psychic damage. | |
| ⸸ **Double Attack** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Effect:* The voice uses *touch of madness* twice. | |
| ✧ **Glimpse of Acamar** ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Attack:* Close burst 3 (enemies in the burst); +20 vs. Fortitude | |
| *Hit:* 3d12 + 15 damage. | |
| *Miss:* Half damage. | |
| *Effect:* If this attack reduces a target to 0 hit points or fewer, the target's takes ongoing 10 damage until it dies or has at least 1 hit point. If a target dies from this attack's damage, the target's body disintegrates. | |
| **Triggered Actions** | |
| ✧ **Annihilation Void** (zone) ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Trigger:* The voice drops to 0 hit points. | |
| *Effect (No Action):* Close burst 1; the burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the encounter. The zone blocks line of sight and line of effect. Any creature that ends its turn in or adjacent to the zone takes 30 damage. A creature that is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer by this damage is utterly destroyed, along with its equipment. | |
| **Skills** Arcana +17, Dungeoneering +14 | |
| **Str** 22 (+14) **Dex** 12 (+9) **Wis** 13 (+9) | |
| **Con** 20 (+13) **Int** 19 (+12) **Cha** 24 (+15) | |
| **Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** all | |

| **Maw of Acamar** | **Level 15 Controller** |
|---|---|
| Large aberrant humanoid | XP 1,200 |
| **HP** 145; **Bloodied** 77 | **Initiative** +9 |
| **AC** 29, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 26, **Will** 27 | **Perception** +11 |
| **Speed** 6 | Darkvision |

**Traits**

**☼ Hungry Star ✦ Aura** 5
Each square in the aura costs 3 extra squares of movement if the creature is moving farther away from the maw.

**Destroyer of Life**
When an enemy adjacent to the maw succeeds on a saving throw against ongoing damage, the ongoing damage is reduced by 5, ending only if it is reduced to 0.

**Standard Actions**

**⊕ Devouring Touch ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* Ongoing 20 damage (save ends).

**⌖ Devouring Star ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Close burst 3 (creatures in the burst); +18 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* Ongoing 10 damage (save ends).

**Minor Actions**

**⌖ Corpse Star's Grip ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Close burst 5 (creatures in the burst); +19 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* The maw pulls the target up to 3 squares.

**Triggered Actions**

**Life Devourer ✦ At-Will**
*Trigger:* A creature within 2 squares of the maw spends a healing surge.
*Effect (Immediate Reaction):* The range or area of the maw's attack powers increases by 2 until the end of the maw's next turn.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 20 (+12) | **Dex** 15 (+9) | **Wis** 19 (+11) |
| **Con** 17 (+10) | **Int** 11 (+7) | **Cha** 16 (+10) |

**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** telepathy 10

| **3 Abyssal Ghouls** | **Level 16 Skirmisher** |
|---|---|
| Medium elemental humanoid (undead) | XP 1,400 each |
| **HP** 156; **Bloodied** 78 | **Initiative** +16 |
| **AC** 30, **Fortitude** 30, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 25 | **Perception** +10 |
| **Speed** 8, climb 4 | Darkvision |
| **Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic | |

**Traits**

**☼ Sepulchral Stench ✦ Aura** 3
Enemies take a –2 penalty to all defenses while in the aura.

**Hindering Light**
Whenever the ghoul takes radiant damage, it cannot shift until the end of its next turn.

**Standard Actions**

**⊕ Bite ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +20 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d8 + 10 damage, plus 1d8 + 3 damage if the target is immobilized, restrained, stunned, or unconscious. In addition, the target is immobilized (save ends).
*Effect:* The ghoul shifts up to 3 squares.

**Triggered Actions**

**⌖ Dead Blood** (necrotic) **✦ Encounter**
*Trigger:* The ghoul drops to 0 hit points.
*Effect (No Action):* Close burst 1 (enemies in the burst). Each target takes 10 necrotic damage.

**Skills** Stealth +19

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 24 (+15) | **Dex** 22 (+14) | **Wis** 15 (+10) |
| **Con** 20 (+13) | **Int** 16 (+11) | **Cha** 10 (+8) |

**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Common

# Event 4: Voice of Hadar

**Combat Encounter Level 16 (7,100 XP)**
The characters encounter Linza, the voice of Hadar, on one of her routine patrols.

**Monsters:** Linza (voice of Hadar), 2 heralds of Hadar, 5 starwarped initiates.

**Read:**
*A horrid female tiefling in black robes clutches a staff as she stalks the halls, smoke roiling from boils on her red flesh. A pair of withered old human males with orange, glowing eyes accompany her. Behind them are five robed initiates whispering in Deep Speech.*

Any character who understands Deep Speech can tell that the initiates are praying to Hadar.

**Lore:** Linza, the voice of Hadar, seeks to depose Ilshaeren and wrest the *eye of Allabar* from his greedy clutches. She needs Vaden's support, however, and he has yet to acquiesce to her terms. Fearing that Ilshaeren and Vaden might form an alliance against her, she keeps abreast of everything that happens in Starhaunt and never stays in one place for long.

When she was sane, Linza was in charge of recruitment and handled all correspondence to and from the observatory. In her madness, Linza harbors a grudge against Ilshaeren and has been quietly trying to depose him for months. This grudge stems from the fact that Ilshaeren brought Vaden into the order without her consent and gave him a status within the order that rivals her own. It is strange that she would try to forge an alliance with Vaden to overthrow Ilshaeren, but she's no longer thinking with a clear mind.

**Voice of Hadar** **Level 17 Elite Artillery**
Medium aberrant humanoid XP 3,200

**HP** 244; **Bloodied** 122 **Initiative** +12
**AC** 31, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 30 **Perception** +10
**Speed** 6 Darkvision
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

☼ **Dying Embers** (fire, necrotic) ✦ **Aura** 2
While the voice is bloodied, any enemy in the aura that hits the voice with an attack takes 10 fire and necrotic damage.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ ☽ **Draining Consumption** (fire, necrotic) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 or Ranged 10 (one or two creatures); +22 vs. Fortitude. If the voice targets only one creature, it can make this attack twice against that creature.
*Hit:* 3d6 + 14 fire and necrotic damage, and the voice gains 10 temporary hit points.

✲ **Glimpse of Hadar** (fire, necrotic) ✦ **Encounter**
*Attack:* Area burst 2 within 10 (creatures in the burst); +22 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 3d8 + 14 fire and necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).
*Miss:* Half damage.
*Effect:* If this attack reduces a target to 0 hit points or fewer, the target takes a -5 penalty to death saving throws until the end of the encounter.

**Triggered Actions**

**Dying Star** (polymorph) ✦ **Encounter**
*Trigger:* The voice is first bloodied.
*Effect (No Action):* The voice becomes old and frail, so that it is slowed and gains vulnerable 5 to all damage until the end of the encounter.

**Skills** Arcana +18, Dungeoneering +15
**Str** 16 (+11) **Dex** 19 (+12) **Wis** 15 (+10)
**Con** 14 (+10) **Int** 21 (+13) **Cha** 23 (+14)
**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** all

**2 Heralds of Hadar** **Level 15 Brute**
Medium aberrant humanoid XP 1,200 each

**HP** 180; **Bloodied** 90 **Initiative** +9
**AC** 27, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 26, **Will** 27 **Perception** +11
**Speed** 6 Darkvision

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Hungry Claws** ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* The herald makes the following attack twice.
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +20 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d10 + 10 damage.

⸸ **Feeding Frenzy** ✦ **Encounter**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +20 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d10 + 9 damage.
*Effect:* The herald uses the attack of *hungry claws* three times. No more than two of the attacks can target the same creature.

✧ **Breath of a Dying Star** ✦ **Encounter**
*Attack:* Close blast 5 (creatures in the blast); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 2d10 + 10 damage, and the target cannot spend healing surges or regain hit points (save ends both).

**Triggered Actions**

**Hadar's Hunger** ✦ **At-Will**
*Trigger:* A creature within 5 squares of the herald spends a healing surge.
*Effect (Immediate Reaction):* The herald chooses one of the following options.
1. The herald shifts up to 3 squares but must end the move closer to the triggering creature.
2. The herald uses *hungry claws.*
3. The herald recharges one of its encounter powers.
4. The herald gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

**Str** 17 (+10) **Dex** 15 (+9) **Wis** 18 (+11)
**Con** 20 (+12) **Int** 10 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9)
**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** telepathy 10

## THE METEORITE'S PATH

The small meteorite containing the *eye of Allabar* struck the top of the observation tower, damaging the two upper levels (areas 39 and 40). The meteor continued its descent into the fortress proper, crashing through the ceiling and side wall of the temple (area 30). It then smashed through the floor of the upper gallery (area 21) before plunging deep into the ground, finally coming to rest in the underground catacombs (area 19).

Two halves of the meteorite still rest in the catacombs. The *eye of Allabar* is in Ilshaeren's possession.

**5 Starwarped Initiates** **Level 15 Minion Brute**
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 300 each

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +9
**AC** 27, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 27 **Perception** +11
**Speed** 6

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Conjured Star Mace** (radiant, weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 14 radiant damage.

☽ **Eldritch Bolt** (force, implement) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 14 force damage.

**Str** 11 (+7) **Dex** 15 (+9) **Wis** 9 (+6)
**Con** 16 (+10) **Int** 10 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common
**Equipment** robes, rod

# The Observatory

The fortress observatory of Starhaunt sits atop a rocky crag surrounded by forests and meadows, several miles from the nearest settlement. The warlock Thulzar chose this location because of its privacy, and because the night sky here is a wonder to behold. A well-worn path leads up the gently sloping south face of the crag to the gatehouse, which is locked and guarded at all hours.

The fortress has stood for nearly a hundred years. Constructed of fine masonry, it is now beginning to show signs of age. Six weeks ago, before Merik arrived at Starhaunt, an earthquake shook the observatory when Linza, the voice of Hadar, performed a ritual to transform several of the order's members into a new form of star spawn, star beckoners. The quake broke the tip of the crag apart from the rest of the rock, forming a cleft between the observation tower and the rest of the fortress. It also damaged other parts of the observatory, as described in those sections of the adventure.

# Encounter Areas

Most of the encounters in Starhaunt take place in specific areas and are keyed to the maps.

## Outer Yard (Areas 1–4)

A 20-foot-high, 2-foot-thick stone wall encloses this small yard. The wall has been worn smooth over time and requires a DC 25 Athletics check to climb.

## 1. Gatehouse

**Combat Encounter Level 17 (9,400 XP)**

This gatehouse is guarded.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Monsters:** Nerielle (eladrin hexblade), 2 star beckoners, 8 starwarped initiates. All eight statues are initiates who have been magically petrified to stand as guardians outside the walls. The two star beckoners lurk out of sight in the courtyard, ready to attack anyone who gets inside.

**Read:**

*The dirt road leading to the gatehouse is flanked by eight statues. The statues vary in appearance, some male and some female, though all are human and dressed in robes. Each one brandishes a rod. The gatehouse is a simple, austere structure featuring a tall stone battlement and closed portcullis. Standing atop the gatehouse is a cloaked guard.*

The figure atop the gatehouse is Nerielle, the eladrin seneschal of Starhaunt. Nerielle makes no effort to be diplomatic. The eladrin is here to turn away unwanted visitors, such as the adventurers, and she denies access to the observatory and anyone within. Nerielle claims that no one like Merik has come to Starhaunt. A successful DC 31 Insight check confirms that she is hiding something. She continues her denials anyway, demanding that the characters leave.

**Ladder:** A sturdy wooden ladder is mounted to the inside wall of the gatehouse and leads to the roof.

**Portcullis:** A heavy wooden portcullis bars entry into the courtyard and can provide partial cover if it is between a melee or ranged attacker and the attack's target. The portcullis can be raised or lowered by any member of the order who speaks the proper command word. It can also be raised or lowered with a successful DC 31 Arcana check or a DC 39 Athletics check. A Small character can squeeze through the bars with a DC 22 Acrobatics check.

| **Eladrin Hexblade** | **Level 16 Artillery** |
|---|---|
| Medium fey humanoid | XP 1,400 |
| **HP** 120; **Bloodied** 60 | **Initiative** +13 |
| **AC** 30, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 29 | **Perception** +13 |
| **Speed** 6 | Low-light vision |
| **Saving Throws** +5 against charm effects | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Conjured Star Blade** (radiant, weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +19 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 3d8 + 6 radiant damage, and ongoing 5 radiant damage (save ends). While adjacent to the hexblade, the target cannot save against the ongoing damage. | |
| ⊕ **Eldritch Bolt** (force, implement) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +21 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 2d8 + 14 force damage. | |
| **Move Actions** | |
| **Star Stride** (teleportation) ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Effect:* The hexblade teleports up to 5 squares and gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of the hexblade's next turn. | |
| **Minor Actions** | |
| **Vision of the Void** (fear, psychic) ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞ | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +21 vs. Will | |
| *Hit:* Ongoing 15 psychic damage (save ends). If the target is already taking ongoing damage, the target moves its speed as a free action, and each square the target enters must be farther from the hexblade. | |
| **Skills** Arcana +14, Bluff +19, Insight +13 | |
| **Str** 11 (+8) **Dex** 21 (+13) **Wis** 11 (+8) | |
| **Con** 18 (+12) **Int** 13 (+9) **Cha** 22 (+14) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Common, Elven | |
| **Equipment** chainmail, rod | |

One square = 5 feet
Ground Floor
Path of Meteorite
Hole in Floor
Up
Down
Underground
Meteorite
STARHAUNT
Lower Levels
N
E
S
W

**2 Star Beckoners** **Level 16 Elite Soldier**
Medium aberrant humanoid XP 2,800 each

**HP** 320; **Bloodied** 160 **Initiative** +15
**AC** 32, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 28 **Perception** +11
**Speed** 6 Darkvision
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

**Threatening Reach**
The beckoner can make opportunity attacks against enemies within 2 squares of it.

**Standard Actions**

**⊕ Tentacle ✦ At-Will**
*Requirement:* The beckoner must have fewer than two creatures grabbed.
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +21 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d10 + 13 damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 22) until the end of the beckoner's next turn.
*Sustain Minor:* One of the beckoner's grabs persists, and the creature on which the grab persists takes 2d10 + 13 damage.

**⸸ Tentacle Flurry ✦ At-Will**
*Requirement:* The beckoner must have no creature grabbed.
*Effect:* The beckoner uses *tentacle* twice.

**Star Wisps ✦ Recharge ⚄ ⚅**
*Effect:* The beckoner calls forth up to three star wisps, which appear within 5 squares of the beckoner and act immediately after it in the initiative order. The star wisps remain until destroyed or until the beckoner takes a minor action to dispel them. A beckoner can have no more than three star wisps present at a given time.

**Str** 21 (+13) **Dex** 21 (+13) **Wis** 7 (+6)
**Con** 24 (+15) **Int** 4 (+5) **Cha** 22 (+14)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech

**Star Wisps** **Level 16 Minion Skirmisher**
Small aberrant magical beast XP –

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +17
**AC** 30, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 27 **Perception** +6
**Speed** 0, fly 6 (hover; altitude limit 2) Darkvision
**Immune** radiant

**Traits**

**Luminous**
While not invisible, the wisp sheds bright light out to 10 squares.

**Standard Actions**

**⊕ Star Burn** (radiant) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +19 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 12 radiant damage.

**Minor Actions**

**Darken ✦ At-Will**
*Effect:* The wisp becomes invisible until it takes a minor action to end the effect. While invisible, the wisp cannot attack.

**Str** 2 (+4) **Dex** 24 (+15) **Wis** 6 (+6)
**Con** 20 (+13) **Int** 3 (+4) **Cha** 21 (+13)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** –

**8 Starwarped Initiates** **Level 15 Minion Brute**
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 300 each

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +9
**AC** 27, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 27 **Perception** +11
**Speed** 6

**Standard Actions**

**⊕ Conjured Star Mace** (radiant, weapon) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 14 radiant damage.

**⊗ Eldritch Bolt** (force, implement) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 14 force damage.

**Str** 11 (+7) **Dex** 15 (+9) **Wis** 9 (+6)
**Con** 16 (+10) **Int** 10 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common
**Equipment** robes, rod

**Tactics:** If the characters refuse to leave, Nerielle whispers a command word that restores the petrified initiates to flesh and orders them to attack while she makes ranged attacks from atop the gatehouse. The battlement provides her with superior cover against attacks from the ground, and she can duck to gain total cover against such attacks. If she is forced into melee combat or knocked off the gatehouse, she uses *star stride* to teleport closer to the star beckoners.

Among the enemies here, only Nerielle is likely to surrender if near defeat.

**The Hexblade:** Nerielle is a female eladrin of surpassing beauty, but her insanity is apparent in her eyes. As Ilshaeren's trusted servant, she has been charged with guarding the gatehouse. She is secretly in love with Ilshaeren.

Her mix of madness, loyalty, and love makes Nerielle hard to interrogate. Impose a -5 penalty to checks made to do so. On a successful check, give the player one relevant piece of the following information. On a failure, Nerielle bluffs and gives misinformation.

- ✦ Merik is a prisoner in Starhaunt.
- ✦ Ilshaeren is entertaining the old sage in the tower observatory (area 38).
- ✦ The order has given up its resistance against the star powers and embraced them instead.
- ✦ Acamar, Hadar, and Gibbeth, the star powers, demand sacrifices. In return, the order receives devoted star spawn emissaries.

## 2. Stables

**Exploration Encounter**

The adventurers discover unusual wreckage in the observatory's stables.

**Light:** Dim (sunlight streaming through gaps in the roof) or none.

**Creatures:** 4 horses.

### POOR DEFENSES

The defenders of Starhaunt Observatory have all been driven mad, causing many fractures within the organization. As a consequence, the fortress is badly defended. Members of the order do not come to each other's defense.

**Read:**
*This wooden stable contains seven horse stalls, four of which hold black steeds. Sundry bits of stable gear adorn the walls and litter the floor. A pile of wooden debris fills the northeast corner.*

Members of the order ride across the countryside in search of those whom Allabar deems worthy sacrifices to the star powers. The horses are nervous around aberrant creatures but otherwise calm. If needed, horse statistics can be found in *Monster Vault*.

Various stable tools, tack and harness sets, and bags of feed can also be found here. The remains of two small wagons are piled in the northeast corner. When the earthquake separated the observation tower from the rest of the crag, members of the order used wood from these wagons to construct the bridge that links the fortress to the tower.

## 3. Storage Shed

**Exploration Encounter**

This wooden shed contains nothing of significance.

**Light:** None.

**Read:**
*This musty building is littered with mundane gear.*

A search of the shed reveals empty barrels and crates, tools, coils of rope, extra blankets and bedding, some lengths of chain, a few lanterns, jugs of oil, and whatever else you see fit to include.

## 4. Refreshing Pool

**Exploration Encounter**

The characters come upon a magical pool that they might use to refresh themselves.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Read:**
*A pool of water lies before you. The smell of ripe berries emanates from the water.*

This pool was created long ago as a magical source of water for the observatory. A trained DC 16 Arcana check reveals the magical nature of the pool and its refreshing capabilities. Any creature that drinks from the pool regains one healing surge (up to the creature's normal maximum). A creature can gain this benefit again only after it has taken an extended rest.

# Ground Floor (Areas 5–18)

The observatory is built around a central, open courtyard (area 7). Two stairways connect the ground floor to the upper level, and the southern stairs also lead down to the catacombs (area 19).

The ceilings here are 10 feet high and constructed of sturdy wooden timbers holding heavy wooden planks that form the floor of the upper level. Floors on this level are composed of simple stone tiles unless otherwise noted.

Much of the ground floor is unoccupied when the adventurers arrive. As they explore the various rooms and corridors, play up the eerie emptiness. If the players start to get bored, use one or more of the events to liven things up.

**Doors:** All doors are made of dark oak with iron fittings. They are typically unlocked and have AC/Fortitude 20, Reflex 5, and 60 hit points.

## 5. Entry Hall

**Exploration Encounter**

This entry chamber stands between the outer and inner courtyards. The outer set of doors is barred from the inside and requires a DC 31 Athletics check to force open. Characters can instead enter by climbing 5 feet up through the windows on either side of the double doors.

**Light:** Bright (light from the windows during the day, and torches in brackets).

**Once the characters enter, read:**
*This simple, stone-walled chamber contains a pair of flickering torches in brackets and two sets of double doors.*

A successful DC 22 Perception check discerns a dry patch of blood just inside the double doors leading to the outer courtyard, as well as a few more specks of blood trailing north.

## 6. Lower Gallery

**Exploration Encounter**

This plain corridor surrounds the inner courtyard.

**Light:** Bright (light from the windows during the day, and torches in brackets).

**Read:**
*A 10-foot-wide corridor surrounds a central courtyard visible through filthy, narrow windows and accessible through sets of double doors. A handful of torches line the corridor walls, providing flickering light.*

The gallery corridor outside the dining hall (area 17) features eight alcoves, six of which contain life-sized stone statues depicting deceased members of the order (not including Thulzar).

## 7. Inner Courtyard

**Exploration Encounter**

This central courtyard is open to the sky.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Read:**
*This open courtyard has a walkway of packed earth dividing quadrants of vegetation. A poorly tended garden in the northwestern section has a gaping hole in it. Amid the overgrown grass of the southeastern quadrant is a stone basin that could be a fountain.*

**Fountain:** Once magical in nature, this fountain offered comfort to the residents and advantages against aberrant creatures. The corruption in the observatory has left the fountain fouled. It currently contains stagnant water to a depth of 1 foot. Any creature that drinks the water loses a healing surge.

**Hole:** When Allabar's meteorite struck the observatory, it crashed through the upper gallery, punched a hole in the northern ceiling and wall of this lower gallery, and made a hole through the garden that has been back-filled so that it is only 10 feet deep.

## 8. Study

**Exploration Encounter**

This chamber once served as the astronomers' study.

**Light:** None (unlit torches in brackets).

**Read:**
*This large, round chamber sports a pair of large wooden tables, each surrounded by simple chairs. A pair of mostly empty bookshelves jut from one wall.*

The bookshelves contain a handful of rolled-up charts showing the positions of stars at various times of the year, as well as astronomers' journals. The last entry in one of the journals, dated a little more than a year ago and written by a former initiate named Adarren, reads as follows:

*The strangest coincidence! The observatory was struck last night by a meteorite, which came to rest in the catacombs. Linza says it's an ill omen, but Ilshaeren urged us all not to rush to any judgments until the truth can be ascertained.*

## 9. Lower Cells

**Exploration Encounter**

This area contains cells used by the fortress garrison as personal sleeping chambers.

**Light:** None in the cells, but bright in the corridor (torches in brackets).

**Read:**
*This corridor is lined with wooden doors. Flickering torches mounted on the walls provide light.*

Each cell contains a wooden bunk bed and two chests. Each chest holds clothes and other personal items, but nothing of particular value.

## 10. Korev's Quarters

**Exploration Encounter**

This bedchamber belongs to Korev, the dragonborn captain of the guard.

**Light:** None (unlit torches in brackets).

**Monsters:** Korev is normally in area 34, but he returns to these quarters twice per day to write in his journal, clean his weapons, and meditate.

**Read:**
*This chamber contains a bed, a desk and chair, and several other pieces of furniture, including a large wooden chest.*

The chest contains clothes and personal effects. A DC 22 Perception check reveals a false bottom, inside which is the dragonborn's personal journal, with entries written in Draconic. Much of the information is pedantic, dealing with guard duties, military training, and the like. However, a few entries contain useful information. Korev's growing madness is reflected in his handwriting, which becomes harder to read in later entries.

For every few minutes a character spends reading the journal, reveal one noteworthy bit of information from the list below.

- A meteorite struck the fortress a little over a year ago, and Ilshaeren (the leader of the order) found in its core a magical orb, which was later determined to be an astrolabe. The two halves of the small meteorite were so heavy that Korev could barely move them.
- Not long after the meteorite fell, Ilshaeren began acting strangely. For one thing, he banished the three priests of Bahamut, Ioun, and Pelor who resided at Starhaunt. (Unknown to Korev, Ilshaeren actually had them poisoned and quietly disposed of.)
- Ilshaeren used the astrolabe to calculate when Allabar, a wandering star, would be in conjunction with various other stars.
- Ilshaeren, Vaden, and Linza use the astrolabe, which they dubbed the *eye of Allabar*, to summon star spawn to the world. For that, they need sacrifices. Ilshaeren gave Korev lists of names and

orders to find the people on each list and bring them back to the observatory before a certain date.

- Korev and his soldiers took their horses and traveled far in search of the people on Ilshaeren's lists, never questioning their orders.
- A shadar-kai priest named Saloma claiming to be a member of an apocalypse cult came to the fortress six months ago under the cover of night, offering to help the order prepare for the "end times." Ilshaeren welcomed her with open arms. Saloma is rarely without her undead ally, which Korev calls "the invisible eyes" (an oblique reference to the ghost beholder, Daarzan).
- About three months ago, Vaden invoked a dark ritual that transformed several bodies in the catacombs into ghouls. Korev refers to Vaden as a "brazen fool likely to get himself killed."
- Six weeks ago, several members of the order volunteered to be transformed into what Linza called "star beckoners." Korev notes that the transformation is risky and not something he's willing to undertake. In a later entry, Korev observes (rather dispassionately) that Linza's ritual worked but also triggered an earthquake that broke the tower observatory away from the main fortress.
- Three days ago, Korev returned to the fortress after having secured more sacrifices for an imminent conjunction of Allabar and Gibbeth. That event is due to occur within the week.
- When he returned to the fortress, Korev found Ellerin, a member of the order, hiding out in the upstairs library. Korev believes that Ellerin is harmless. He also discovered that an old sage named Merik had come to the observatory seeking counsel. Merik is currently Ilshaeren's "guest" in the tower.

## 11. Armory

**Exploration Encounter**

This area holds various armor and weapons.

**Light:** None (unlit torches in brackets).

**Read:**

*This chamber contains shelves, weapon racks, and armor stands, though most of them are bare. A few weapons and pieces of armor are scattered about.*

## 12. Forge

**Exploration Encounter**

The order once employed this forge to make weapons for use against evil star powers.

**Light:** Dim (glowing embers in the fireplaces).

**Creature:** Fire elemental (companion).

**Read:**

*This spacious forge holds a pair of fireplaces surrounded by bellows, water tubs, anvils, and hammers. Other tools and bits of metal are strewn atop tables and shelves.*

**Perception DC 22:** *A whisper comes from the southernmost forge.*

The embers in the forges burn eternally and allow the forges to be stoked easily and to high temperatures. The whispering comes from a lesser fire elemental that lives in these fireplaces. It was once responsible for keeping the fires going, but has since been left here alone. A character who peers into the southern forge spots the elemental. If questioned, it explains its purpose and that it awaits the day when it will be put to use again.

A trained DC 22 Arcana check is enough to overcome the magic that binds the fire elemental to the forge. If freed, it follows its liberator around as a companion until the character decides to release it or until you decide it's time for the elemental to return to the Elemental Chaos.

| **Fire Elemental Companion** | **Level 15 Striker** |
|---|---|
| Medium elemental magical beast (fire) | |
| **HP** 94; **Bloodied** 47; **Healing Surges** 7 | **Initiative** +12 |
| **AC** 30, **Fortitude** 26, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 28 | **Perception** +8 |
| **Speed** 8 | |
| **Immune** fire | |
| **Traits** | |
| **Frozen in Place** | |
| Whenever the elemental takes cold damage, it cannot shift until the end of its next turn. | |
| **Heart of Flame** (fire) | |
| Whenever an enemy adjacent to the elemental hits it with a melee attack, that enemy takes 5 fire damage. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Slam** (fire) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 2d6 + 12 fire damage. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| **Flickering Flame** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Effect:* The elemental shifts up to 3 squares. | |
| **Str** 10 (+7) **Dex** 20 (+12) | **Wis** 13 (+8) |
| **Con** 12 (+8) **Int** 5 (+4) | **Cha** 16 (+10) |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Primordial | |

## 13. War Room

**Exploration Encounter**

This room was used by the fortress's military garrison to plan for the coming fight with the star spawn.

**Light:** None (unlit torches in brackets).

**Read:**

*A large, empty, oak table stands in the middle of this room, surrounded by six sturdy wooden chairs. A pair of bookcases filled with books lie along one wall.*

The books contain records of the order's training schedules. They record the names of members of the order throughout the decades, descriptions of training exercises they conducted in the adjacent training room, and performance evaluations.

## 14. Training Room

**Exploration Encounter**

This chamber served as a training area for military members of the order.

**Light:** None (unlit torches in brackets).

**Monster:** If the characters have not yet encountered the ghost beholder in the temple (area 30), there is a 50 percent chance it is here. If the characters encounter the creature here, it fires an *eye ray* at one of them and then phases through the ceiling.

**Read:**

*This enormous chamber is supported by wooden columns. The floor tiles here are spotted with long-dried blood, and armor-clad dummies made of straw stand about the room like weary soldiers.*

## 15. Storage

**Combat Encounter Level 16 (7,000 XP)**

This room contained surplus food, which the ghouls trapped here have all but devoured.

**Door:** This room's door is magically locked and requires a DC 31 Athletics check or Thievery check to open. When the door opens, the ghouls attack.

**Perception DC 22:** A character listening at the door hears the sound of shuffling feet. The character also smells a rotten stench.

**Light:** None.

**Monsters:** 5 abyssal ghouls.

**Read:**

*Debris from shattered crates litters the floor of this storage room. A powerful stench comes from the pack of ghouls that suddenly lunges toward you!*

The ghouls were created by Vaden from preserved human corpses in the catacombs (area 19). Vaden was unable to control them all, however, so Ilshaeren commanded him to confine some in this room.

| **5 Abyssal Ghouls** | **Level 16 Skirmisher** |
|---|---|
| Medium elemental humanoid (undead) | XP 1,400 each |
| **HP** 156; **Bloodied** 78 | **Initiative** +16 |
| **AC** 30, **Fortitude** 30, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 25 | **Perception** +10 |
| **Speed** 8, climb 4 | Darkvision |
| **Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic | |
| **Traits** | |
| ☼ **Sepulchral Stench** ✦ **Aura** 3 | |
| Enemies take a -2 penalty to all defenses while in the aura. | |
| **Hindering Light** | |
| Whenever the ghoul takes radiant damage, it cannot shift until the end of its next turn. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⨁ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +20 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 3d8 + 10 damage, plus 1d8 + 3 damage if the target is immobilized, restrained, stunned, or unconscious. In addition, the target is immobilized (save ends). | |
| *Effect:* The ghoul shifts up to 3 squares. | |
| **Triggered Actions** | |
| ✧ **Dead Blood** (necrotic) ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Trigger:* The ghoul drops to 0 hit points. | |
| *Effect (No Action):* Close burst 1 (enemies in the burst). Each target takes 10 necrotic damage. | |
| **Skills** Stealth +19 | |
| **Str** 24 (+15) **Dex** 22 (+14) **Wis** 15 (+10) | |
| **Con** 20 (+13) **Int** 16 (+11) **Cha** 10 (+8) | |
| **Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Common | |

## 16. Kitchen

**Exploration Encounter**

The kitchen still sees use but is currently unoccupied.

**Light:** Bright (wall braziers).

**Monsters:** If the characters spend a good deal of time here, a guard patrol (see event 1) might happen by to grab a quick snack and catch the party here.

**Read:**

*This spacious kitchen contains a pair of large cooking fireplaces and varnished wooden counters with cabinets built underneath them. The counters are strewn with pots, pans, cooking utensils, and bits of food. Four doors are spaced along the northern wall.*

The doors lead to storage rooms. The largest room is the pantry. It is filled with shelves, barrels, and crates containing various beverages and food. Next to the pantry is the winery, containing shelves of wine bottles, drums of cognac, and casks of mead. Next to this is a spicery. The shelves here are filled with clay pots and vials containing various spices and herbs. The easternmost chamber contains a few brooms, mops, and buckets used for cleaning.

## 17. Dining Hall

**Exploration Encounter**

This grand dining hall doesn't get much use these days, since the order no longer convenes at regular hours for meals.

**Light:** None (unlit wall braziers).

**Read:**

*This large chamber contains a pair of long, finely carved stone dining tables, each surrounded by fourteen sturdy wooden chairs. Each table is adorned with a pair of five-armed candelabras. In two corners of the room stand small, round serving tables. A row of three tall, narrow windows with black curtains line the eastern wall and look out over a misty meadow. Everything is covered in a thin layer of dust.*

## 18. Parlor

**Exploration Encounter**

This room was used as a place of rest, relaxation, and storytelling. It has fallen into disuse.

**Light:** None (unlit wall braziers).

**Read:**
*This simple room contains a pair of plush, upholstered couches. A circular, granite-topped wooden table surrounded by six upholstered chairs fills out the rest of the room. Several paintings adorn the walls. Everything is covered with a thin layer of dust and strung with cobwebs.*

**Treasure:** Seven small paintings of deceased order members hang on the wall. Six of them are normal. The seventh is a *portrait of holding* depicting Thulzar, the order's founder. Only someone who looks like Thulzar can access the portrait's hidden compartment. Currently within the portrait are four *potions of vitality* and a hollow wooden pig containing 150 pp.

**Portrait of Holding** — Level 5 Uncommon

*This painting conceals a secure extradimensional space.*

**Wondrous Item** 1,000 gp

**Property**

The painting conceals an extradimensional space that can hold up to 5 cubic feet of material up to 100 pounds. Whatever it contains, the painting weighs only 1 pound. Drawing an item from the space is a minor action.

**Utility Power ✦ At-Will** (Minor Action)

*Requirement:* To activate this power, a creature must look exactly like the creature depicted in the painting.

*Effect:* The portrait vanishes in its frame, leaving behind a 1-foot-square hole that provides access to the item's extradimensional space.

## Underground (Areas 19–20)

This level is carved out of the crag. The floor, walls, and ceiling of this area are made of natural stone.

## 19. Catacombs

**Exploration Encounter**

This area houses the dead bodies of early, noteworthy members of the Order of the Endless Night.

**Perception DC 25:** The character hears a soft, mumbling voice from somewhere ahead.

**Light:** None.

**Read:**
*The ceiling here is only 7 feet high, and a corridor proceeds north and ends at a pair of doors. Side chambers contain resting beds that are carved into the rock and stacked two high, like stone bunk beds. Some of these beds bear corpses wrapped in death shrouds. The smell of death hangs in the air here.*

**Side Chambers:** The side chambers contain the burial niches of important former members of the order. Each niche once contained a decayed body in a tattered death shroud. However, ten beds are empty; Vaden, the voice of Acamar, transformed the bodies into ghouls three months ago. A DC 22 Arcana or Religion check reveals that a powerful necromantic ritual was used recently in this area.

**Mumbling Corpse:** One of the shroud-wrapped corpses moans and mumbles constantly in Common. A character must get within 10 feet of the corpse to understand what it is saying.

**If the characters listen to the corpse, read:**
*Our goodly order . . . now fallen to darkness . . . please restore this holy place . . . renew the vigil.*

The corpse falls silent once the evil inhabitants in Starhaunt are slain. A one-minute rite that requires a DC 31 Religion check to perform correctly can also silence the restless corpse.

**Meteorite:** The meteorite that crashed into the observatory came through the ceiling and wall of one side chamber, as shown on the map. This meteorite broke in half once it cooled, and the two halves lie on the floor here. A smooth, semicircular indentation in the core of each half suggests that something small and spherical was lodged within and removed.

The meteorite is composed of dense rock and star metal, and although it measures only 12 inches in diameter, its mass is extraordinary. A DC 31 Athletics check is needed to lift one half of the meteorite.

## 20. Reliquary

**Trap Encounter Level 6 (1,400 XP)**

This sanctified chamber contains bones, robes, telescopes, astrolabes, weapons, and various implements (rods, staffs, wands, orbs, and tomes) belonging to astronomers and warriors who helped Thulzar establish Starhaunt Observatory.

**Light:** None.

**Trap:** Hollow locked doors.

**When the characters approach the doors, read:**
*Ahead is a pair of sturdy wooden doors. Carved into the stone above the doors are the holy symbols of Bahamut, Pelor, and Ioun, with script etched below each symbol. The doors, symbols, and text have been fouled with dried blood and blade cuts.*

**Text:** Etched below the holy symbols is text written in Common. The text beneath the symbol of Bahamut reads "The defenders of the world." The text beneath the symbol of Pelor reads "The light against the darkness." The text beneath the symbol of Ioun reads "The keepers of celestial lore."

**Hollow Doors:** The doors are magically locked. Although they appear sturdy, they are hollow and filled with poisonous gas that releases if the doors are smashed open.

| **Hollow Locked Doors** | **Level 16 Trap** |
|---|---|
| Object | XP 1,400 |
| **Detect** see the "Countermeasures" section | **Initiative** – |
| **HP** 15 | |
| **AC** 20, **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 5, **Will** – | |
| **Immune** necrotic, poison, psychic, forced movement, all conditions, ongoing damage | |
| **Triggered Actions** | |
| ✧ **Attack** (poison) ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Trigger:* The doors are broken open (DC 16 Athletics check) or reduced to 0 hit points. | |
| *Attack (No Action):* Close burst 3 (creatures in the burst); +18 vs. Fortitude | |
| *Hit:* Ongoing 20 poison damage (save ends). | |
| *Miss:* Ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends). | |
| *Effect:* The burst creates a zone of poison gas that lingers for 5 minutes. Any creature that ends its turn in the zone takes 10 poison damage. | |
| **Countermeasures** | |
| ✦ **Detect:** Dungeoneering or Perception DC 22 (standard action). *Success:* The character determines that the doors are hollow. | |
| ✦ **Open:** Arcana or Thievery DC 31 (standard action). *Requirement:* The character must be trained in the skill used and adjacent to the doors. *Success:* The doors open without triggering the trap. | |

**When the characters enter, read:**
*This 7-foot-high chamber contains three wooden tables. Two long, narrow ones along the side walls are covered with dusty relics. A wider table holding similar relics stands directly across from the entrance.*

# Second Floor (Areas 21–36)

Two stairways, opposite each other across the courtyard, connect this level to the ground floor. The ceilings here are 10 feet high. Floors are constructed of tightly fitted wooden planks. Thicker walls on the map are made of masonry. Thinner walls are faced with wooden planks.

All doors are made of dark oak with iron fittings.

## 21. Upper Gallery

**Exploration Encounter**

This corridor surrounds and overlooks the inner courtyard (area 6).

**Light:** Bright (sunlight during the day, and torches in brackets).

**Read:**
*A series of columns and railings separate this upstairs gallery from the courtyard below. Flickering torches line the corridor walls.*

Three-foot-high wooden railings run between the stone columns that buttress the ceiling. When the meteorite crashed into the fortress observatory, it punched holes in the ceiling, wall, and floor along the northern side of this gallery.

The double doors to area 22 are barred from this side. The bar can be easily lifted.

## 22. Guard Room

**Exploration Encounter**

This chamber overlooks the outer courtyard.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Read:**
*Arrow slits in the walls of this otherwise empty room overlook the main courtyard.*

The arrow slits are angled downward, allowing archers to attack enemies trying to breach the main entrance. The slits are too narrow to crawl through.

This room is unfurnished and unoccupied.

## 23. Library

**Roleplaying Encounter**

The adventurers encounter a crazed order member.

**Light:** Bright (magical lights).

**Creature:** Ellerin.

**Read:**
*This circular chamber has a conical ceiling. Its walls are lined with 15-foot-high bookshelves packed with tomes and scroll cases. Attached to the bookcases are two rolling ladders. Similar bookshelves stand in the middle of the room, and they too are filled with books and scrolls. Floating points of magical light bathe the area in a warm glow, and tiny bats flutter among the shadowy rafters overhead.*

***Perception DC 22:*** *Soft footfalls come from behind the bookshelves in the middle of the room.*

When the characters enter, an elf named Ellerin is hiding behind the central bookshelves.

**Ellerin:** This elf grew up far away from Starhaunt Observatory, learning of the Order of the Endless Night from his grandmother. For years, he prepared himself to join the order. He is terrified of the star spawn, and he tries to avoid other order members, whom he believes are utterly insane. He fears the adventurers are new initiates sent to test his loyalty and punish him if they find his devotion lacking. Consequently, he pretends to be doing research to help the order, although when pressed for details, he panics and becomes incoherent.

If the adventurers approach him in a friendly manner, kind words assuage his paranoia long enough to strike up a productive conversation with him. If the characters threaten Ellerin, he becomes

One square = 5 feet
Ruined Areas
Path of Meteorite
Tower Level 1
Second Floor
Up
37
31
32
33
34
35
36
Down
21
Illusory Wall
Hole in Floor
Hole in Ceiling
21
21
22
30
Hole in Floor
40
21
Down
28
29
24
Down
27
26
25
23
Tower Level 4
Hole in Ceiling
Down
Up
39
38
Down
Up
Tower Level 3
Tower Level 2
STARHAUNT
Upper Levels
E
N
S
W

inconsolable and incomprehensible. The elf has defenses of 27, and any attack that hits him and deals damage kills him.

About six months ago, Ellerin came to the observatory. He quickly realized that the astronomers were corrupt and took it upon himself to infiltrate their ranks and learn more about what was happening. Although he remained free of corruption, exposure to the influences in the observatory has rendered him insane. He speaks in disjointed sentences and is easily distracted, so getting information out of him can be difficult.

Ellerin knows all the information contained in Korev's journal (area 10). He doesn't know the present whereabouts of Merik the sage, but he can provide the following additional information when sufficiently coerced.

- The order has gathered sacrifices for the next conjunction of Allabar and Gibbeth. These prisoners are being held east of the courtyard (area 35).
- Ilshaeren is probably in the tower observatory. He rarely leaves. His subordinates, Linza and Vaden, wander the fortress with their star spawn lackeys.
- The shadar-kai doomsayer, Saloma, spends most of her time in the temple (area 30). A "ghostly sphere with many eyes" accompanies her.

If the characters help Ellerin escape, he might (with the aid of a Remove Affliction ritual) become a key figure in the revived Order of the Endless Night.

## 24. Upper Cells

**Exploration Encounter**

This area contains quarters set aside for initiates. Several of the rooms have been destroyed.

**Light:** None (unlit hanging lanterns).

**Read:**
*This area, a narrow corridor and several sleeping cells, has been torn to pieces. Rubble and destroyed furniture are strewn across the floor.*

**Damaged Areas:** Vaden's maw of Acamar went on a rampage some time ago, laying waste to Vaden's quarters (area 26) as well as three smaller cells. Vaden managed to calm the star spawn before any lives were lost.

The ruined rooms are littered with debris that is difficult terrain. Despite the damage, the ceiling throughout the area remains intact.

**Intact Cells:** Each cell contains a wooded bunk bed and two chests. Each chest holds clothes and other personal items.

## 25. Linza's Quarters

**Exploration Encounter**

This is the personal chamber of Linza, the voice of Hadar. Linza is usually found wandering Starhaunt.

**Light:** None (unlit hanging lanterns).

**Read:**
*This large chamber contains a well-made bed, a clean desk with matching chair, a tall wooden wardrobe, and a wooden chest. The walls are adorned with six tapestries depicting illustrated representations of the constellations.*

Linza lives here, and although she is quite mad, everything in her quarters is neat and clean.

**Desk:** Linza's desk contains sheets of parchment, jars of ink, wax candles, and quill pens. She uses these tools to write and seal letters on behalf of the Order of the Endless Night.

**Chest:** Linza's chest (AC/Reflex 25; Fortitude 20; immune to cold, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, ongoing damage, and conditions other than immobilized, restrained, and slowed; 50 hit points) is magical and carved with four little feet. It is unlocked, but it scuttles away up to 7 squares when someone other than Linza approaches within 10 feet of it. It contains neatly organized letters from various sages and astronomers, each one addressed to the order or to one of its leaders (Ilshaeren, Linza, or Vaden). Some of the letters report the existence of newly discovered stars and comets; others contain information about possible aberrant and Far Realm incursions into the world.

## 26. Vaden's Quarters

**Exploration Encounter**

Vaden, the voice of Acamar (see event 3), used to reside here.

**Light:** None (unlit hanging lanterns).

**Read:**
*This room is destroyed. The remnants of a bed, desk, shards of glass, and various other pieces of furniture lie strewn about.*

Vaden tried to confine a maw of Acamar in this room, but it destroyed the place, broke out, and laid waste to several adjacent chambers. Vaden finally calmed it down, but nothing in this room could be salvaged. Since Vaden no longer requires sleep, he has little use for quarters anyway.

## 27. Nerielle's Quarters

**Exploration Encounter**

This room serves as the personal quarters of Nerielle (see area 1).

**Light:** None (unlit hanging lanterns).

**Read:**
*This room contains a simple bed, a desk and chair, a tall wooden wardrobe, and a chest. It is in pristine condition, despite the destruction in the corridor outside it.*

If the adventurers search the chamber, a DC 22 Perception check reveals sheets of parchment under the bed's mattress. Each sheet features a charcoal sketch of a young female eladrin being embraced lovingly by an older male eladrin. Nerielle drew these pictures depicting her and Ilshaeren, whom Nerielle secretly loves.

## 28. Clergy Quarters

**Exploration Encounter**

These rooms were for the order's clerics of Bahamut, Ioun, and Pelor. Once evil began to take hold in Starhaunt, Ilshaeren and Linza poisoned the priests and disposed of them.

**Light:** None (unlit wall lanterns).

**Monsters:** Saloma (see area 30) uses the middle cell for rest and meditation.

**Read:**
*This chamber has three wooden doors along one wall. The faint smell of incense lingers here.*

Each cell contains a simple bed and a nightstand.

## 29. Sacristy

**Roleplaying Encounter**

This room once served as a preparatory chamber for clerics who supported the order.

**Light:** None (unlit wall braziers).

**Read:**
*Tall bookcases with glass doors stand against the walls of this carpeted room, which also contains an ornate wooden desk, a matching chair, and a small, round table. Upon the table are a silver candlestick shaped like the symbol of Ioun, a golden amulet shaped like the stylized sun of Pelor, and a platinum aspergillum with a head shaped like that of Bahamut. A half-melted candle stands in the candlestick.*

If someone lights the candle or tries to leave the room carrying the candlestick, Tormerian's apparition appears.

**Tormerian's Apparition:** A temple of Ioun supported the order's efforts, and Tormerian was the last priest of Ioun to reside at Starhaunt. Tormerian's apparition cannot be harmed, and it cannot make attacks or interact physically with its surroundings. It whispers the following truths.

- Tormerian was one of three priests residing in Starhaunt. The other two were a human priest of Bahamut named Lannik and a half-elf priest of Pelor named Orvoth.
- Tormerian died in this room, late at night. He was writing a letter to his temple, requesting material components for rituals, when he drank poisoned wine from a chalice an initiate had brought him.
- Shortly before he was murdered, Tormerian and his fellow priests were concerned about erratic behavior within the order, including its leaders Ilshaeren, Linza, and Vaden. Lannik was convinced that some kind of illness was sweeping

through the order's ranks, but Tormerian and Orvoth believed that a darker force was at work.

- ✦ The mental sickness began spreading shortly after a meteorite crashed into the observatory. The meteorite was hollow and contained a small, spherical device, which Ilshaeren believed to be an astrolabe. Tormerian encouraged Ilshaeren to study the artifact and learn its secrets—advice he now regrets. The other priests were more inclined to destroy the item, fearing it had been sent to disrupt the order.

As the conversation closes, the spirit urges the adventurers to destroy the evil in Starhaunt before it spreads. Once the apparition has conveyed all the information it can, it disappears and never returns.

**Treasure:** The candlestick (100 gp), amulet (250 gp), and aspergillum (2,000 gp) can all be salvaged from this location.

## 30. Temple

**Combat Encounter Level 17 (9,400 XP)**

For many years, the order used this temple as a place of worship dedicated to Bahamut, Ioun, and Pelor.

**Light:** Dim (candles on mounted sticks or sunlight from the holes in the walls during the day).

**Monsters:** Saloma (shadar-kai deathless mage), Daarzan (ghost beholder), 1 star beckoner, 4 star-warped initiates.

**Read:**
*This is a grand temple, its 20-foot-high ceiling buttressed by pillars and rafters. Candles on mounted candlesticks sputter, barely pushing back the gloom.*

*A hole in the northeast corner of the roof is open to the sky, and torches cast shadows throughout. Part of the south wall has collapsed, but no rubble remains. To the west, a wide alcove is painted with three murals depicting Bahamut, Ioun, and Pelor that have been defaced.*

**Daarzan, Ghost Beholder** **Level 18 Elite Artillery**
Large aberrant magical beast (undead) XP 4,000

**HP** 266; **Bloodied** 133 **Initiative** +16
**AC** 30, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 30 **Perception** +17
**Speed** 0, fly 6 (hover); phasing Darkvision
**Immune** disease, poison; **Vulnerable** 15 radiant
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

**All-Around Vision**
Enemies can't gain combat advantage by flanking Daarzan.

**Insubstantial**
Daarzan takes half damage from any damage source, except those that deal force or radiant damage.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +21 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 3d8 + 13 damage.

**Eye Ray** ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* Daarzan uses one of the following eye rays. This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.
1. *Grave Ray* (cold, necrotic): Ranged 10 (one creature); +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 16 cold and necrotic damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).
2. *Mind Ray* (psychic): Ranged 10 (one creature); +23 vs. Will; ongoing 20 psychic damage (save ends).
*First Failed Saving Throw:* The target is also dazed (save ends both).
*Second Failed Saving Throw:* The target is instead dominated (save ends).
3. *Fear Ray* (psychic): Ranged 10 (one creature); +23 vs. Will; 2d8 + 16 psychic damage, and the target moves its speed away from Daarzan as a free action. Each square the target enters must be farther from Daarzan.
4. *Withering Ray* (necrotic): Ranged 10 (one creature); +23 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 16 necrotic damage, and the target cannot regain hit points (save ends).

**Invisibility** (illusion) ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* Daarzan becomes invisible until it hits or misses with an attack, or until the end of its next turn. Daarzan can end the effect as a free action.

**Move Actions**

**Central Eye** (fear) ✦ **At-Will** (1/round)
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +21 vs. Will
*Hit:* Daarzan slides the target up to 5 squares, and the target gains vulnerable 5 to all damage until the start of Daarzan's next turn.

**Triggered Actions**

**Eye of the Beholder** ✦ **At-Will**
*Trigger:* An enemy starts its turn within 5 squares of Daarzan.
*Effect (Free Action):* Daarzan uses a random *eye ray* against the triggering enemy.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 12 (+10) | **Dex** 25 (+16) | **Wis** 16 (+12) |
| **Con** 19 (+13) | **Int** 22 (+15) | **Cha** 25 (+16) |

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech

*Before these icons is a plain stone altar draped in a crimson shroud.*

*A wizened, perhaps elderly, female shadar-kai stands at the altar, chanting in Deep Speech with her back to the murals. Her strange, violet robes cover dark mail of fine metal links. Four cloaked figures kneel before the altar in silent supplication.*

***Perception DC 22:** A human-sized, tentacled monster lurks in the shadows along the north wall.*

Saloma leads four crazed initiates in worship at the altar, while the ghost beholder Daarzan floats silently and invisibly behind her. The star beckoner lurks in the shadows in the northwestern corner.

**When Soloma sees the characters, read:**
*The shadar-kai stops chanting and shouts, "Intruders in our place of worship! Destroy them!"*

**When the ghost beholder becomes visible, read:**
*A spectral beholder materializes behind the shadar-kai and fires a ray from one of its ghostly eyes.*

**Deathless Mage** **Level 16 Controller (Leader)**
Medium shadow humanoid, shadar-kai XP 1,400

**HP** 126; **Bloodied** 63 **Initiative** +10
**AC** 30, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 30 **Perception** +8
**Speed** 6 Low-light vision

**Traits**

☼ **Sapping Shadows ✦ Aura** 3
When a slowed enemy ends its turn in the aura, it takes 5 damage and the mage gains 5 temporary hit points.

**Standard Actions**

⨺ **Sickle** (fear, weapon) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +21 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d8 + 10 damage, and the mage pushes the target up to 2 squares.

✧ **Shadestorm ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Close blast 3 (creatures in the blast); +19 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 1d10 + 12 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the mage's next turn.

➴ **Life Siphon ✦ Recharge** if the power misses
*Attack:* Ranged 5 (one creature); +19 vs. Will
*Hit:* 2d6 + 13 damage, and ongoing 10 damage (save ends). Until the target saves, whenever it takes this ongoing damage, the mage gains an equal number of temporary hit points.

**Minor Actions**

**Life Transfer ✦ At-Will**
*Effect:* Close burst 5 (one ally in the burst). The mage transfers 5 or 10 temporary hit points from itself to the target.

**Skills** Arcana +17, Intimidate +20
**Str** 11 (+8) **Dex** 14 (+10) **Wis** 11 (+8)
**Con** 20 (+13) **Int** 18 (+12) **Cha** 24 (+15)
**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Common
**Equipment** chainmail, sickle

**Star Beckoner** **Level 16 Elite Soldier**
Medium aberrant humanoid XP 2,800

**HP** 320; **Bloodied** 160 **Initiative** +15
**AC** 32, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 28 **Perception** +11
**Speed** 6 Darkvision
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

**Threatening Reach**
The beckoner can make opportunity attacks against enemies within 2 squares of it.

**Standard Actions**

⨺ **Tentacle ✦ At-Will**
*Requirement:* The beckoner must have fewer than two creatures grabbed.
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +21 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d10 + 13 damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 22) until the end of the beckoner's next turn.
*Sustain Minor:* One of the beckoner's grabs persists, and the creature on which the grab persists takes 2d10 + 13 damage.

⨺ **Tentacle Flurry ✦ At-Will**
*Requirement:* The beckoner must have no creature grabbed.
*Effect:* The beckoner uses *tentacle* twice.

**Star Wisps ✦ Recharge** ⚄ ⚅
*Effect:* The beckoner calls forth up to three star wisps, which appear within 5 squares of the beckoner and act immediately after it in the initiative order. The star wisps remain until destroyed or until the beckoner takes a minor action to dispel them. A beckoner can have no more than three star wisps present at a given time.

**Str** 21 (+13) **Dex** 21 (+13) **Wis** 7 (+6)
**Con** 24 (+15) **Int** 4 (+5) **Cha** 22 (+14)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech

**Star Wisp** **Level 16 Minion Skirmisher**
Small aberrant magical beast XP –

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +17
**AC** 30, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 27 **Perception** +6
**Speed** 0, fly 6 (hover; altitude limit 2) Darkvision
**Immune** radiant

**Traits**

**Luminous**
While not invisible, the wisp sheds bright light out to 10 squares.

**Standard Actions**

⨺ **Star Burn** (radiant) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +19 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 12 radiant damage.

**Minor Actions**

**Darken ✦ At-Will**
*Effect:* The wisp becomes invisible until it takes a minor action to end the effect. While invisible, the wisp cannot attack.

**Str** 2 (+4) **Dex** 24 (+15) **Wis** 6 (+6)
**Con** 20 (+13) **Int** 3 (+4) **Cha** 21 (+13)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** –

**4 Starwarped Initiates** **Level 15 Minion Brute**
Medium natural humanoid, human XP 300 each

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +9
**AC** 27, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 27 **Perception** +11
**Speed** 6

**Standard Actions**

⨺ **Conjured Star Mace** (radiant, weapon) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 14 radiant damage.

➴ **Eldritch Bolt** (force, implement) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 14 force damage.

**Str** 11 (+7) **Dex** 15 (+9) **Wis** 9 (+6)
**Con** 16 (+10) **Int** 10 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common
**Equipment** robes, rod

**Lore:** When the astronomers became corrupt, they defaced the murals, tore down the shrines, and threw the wreckage in a small northeastern room. The meteorite is responsible for the hole in the roof.

**Saloma:** An elderly shadar-kai seer, Saloma is haunted by images of her death, which she knows will come before the end times. If she is captured, she quietly warns the adventurers of their impending deaths as a consequence of meddling in the affairs of the stars. She believes her only purpose is to help bring about the end of the world.

A year ago, Allabar sent Saloma a vision of a meteor crashing into Starhaunt. She promptly abandoned her doomsday cult and made a pilgrimage to the observatory. While traversing a subterranean passage, she encountered Daarzan and persuaded him to accompany her.

Ilshaeren welcomed Saloma when she arrived and placed her in charge of the starwarped initiates.

## 31. Rickety Bridge

**Exploration Encounter**

This crossing now connects the main fortress to the tower that was separated from it in the earthquake.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Read:**
*A rickety bridge made from scrap wood lashed together with rope connects the main fortress to the tower observatory. The bridge spans a crevice sixty feet deep.*

The bridge can support up to 400 pounds without breaking. A successful DC 22 Dungeoneering check reveals that the bridge is safe to cross, as well as its weight limit.

## 32. Ruined Chambers

**Exploration Encounter**

The earthquake that caused the tower to break away from the main fortress badly damaged this corner of the structure.

**Light:** Dim sunlight coming through the broken roof during the day, or none.

**Read:**
*This corner of the fortress has partially collapsed. Several walls are broken, the roof has caved in, and the area is littered with wooden beams, stone debris, and smashed furnishings.*

This area once contained a recreation room, a privy, and sleeping cells for initiates. These rooms are now choked with debris that is difficult terrain.

## 33. Intact Cells

**Roleplaying Encounter**

Three rooms are adjacent to the damaged corner of the fortress, and one contains a chilling sight.

**Light:** None (unlit hanging lanterns).

**Monster:** Zeryn (starwarped initiate).

**Read:**
*Three sleeping chambers stand next to a section of the fortress that has partially collapsed.*

These three cells and the corridor that connects them were not badly damaged by the earthquake. Each cell contains a wood bunk bed and two chests. Each chest holds clothes and other personal items.

**Inhabited Cells:** The two southern cells each contain an initiate. The initiate in the westernmost room, a male human, has had his skull crushed. A DC 16 Heal check reveals that he was killed by a blow to the head. The initiate in the easternmost cell, a female human named Zeryn, is asleep. Any attempt to wake her causes Zeryn to scream, which alerts the guards in area 34. (One starwarped sentinel investigates.) Leaning against Zeryn's bed is a bloody rod.

| **Starwarped Initiate** | **Level 15 Minion Brute** |
|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | XP 300 |
| **HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | **Initiative** +9 |
| **AC** 27, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 27 | **Perception** +11 |
| **Speed** 6 | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | |
| ⊕ **Conjured Star Mace** (radiant, weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 14 radiant damage. | |
| ⊗ **Eldritch Bolt** (force, implement) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 14 force damage. | |
| **Str** 11 (+7) **Dex** 15 (+9) **Wis** 9 (+6) | |
| **Con** 16 (+10) **Int** 10 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9) | |
| **Alignment** evil | **Languages** Common |
| **Equipment** robes, rod | |

**Zeryn:** A low-ranking member of the order, Zeryn admits to killing Andros in his sleep because he was snoring too loudly. Although she is deranged, she doesn't attack the heroes until she is ordered to do so or she is provoked. Provoking her is easy, and she attacks if:

- ✦ A character laughs. (Zeryn hates laughter.)
- ✦ A character mentions Linza. (Zeryn hates Linza.)
- ✦ A character tries to lure Zeryn into daylight. (Zeryn hates daylight.)

Casting a Remove Affliction ritual on Zeryn restores her sanity, but her recent misdeeds shock her into extreme grief. She can be consoled only with a DC 22 Diplomacy check.

## 34. Prison Guard Post

**Combat Encounter Level 17 (8,000 XP)**

This partially collapsed section of the fortress houses a makeshift prison.

**Light:** Bright (torches in brackets).

**Monsters:** Captain Korev (dragonborn knight), 3 starwarped sentinels.

**Read:**

*This torchlit area once contained several rooms, but the walls separating them have partially collapsed along with most of the ceiling. The debris has been pushed into the northeastern corner, making room for several wandering guards with insane gleams in their eyes. To the south, a child is sobbing.*

**Treasure:** Korev has the keys to the prison.

## 35. Prison

**Roleplaying Encounter**

Prisoners are kept here.

**Light:** Dim (from torches in area 34).

**Creatures:** 8 prisoners.

**Read:**

*Filling one side of this room is a large cell behind a wall of bars with an iron door set into the middle of it. The bars and the door glow with an unwholesome purple light. Eight prisoners, including two children, lie on the floor. One of the children is sobbing but stops when she sees you.*

The prisoners have the same birthday. They include, from youngest to oldest:

- Maddie Graystone, a 7-year-old female human
- Joran Selar, an 11-year-old male half-elf
- Verrika Sandalbane, a 19-year-old female halfling jeweler
- Donald Winterpine, a 23-year-old male human good-for-nothing son of a wealthy landowner
- Kylo "Digger" Godwick, a 29-year-old male human gravedigger (mute)
- Druzilla, a 37-year-old female tiefling clerk
- Sylvia Smead, a 41-year-old female human brewer (owner of Smead's Meads)
- Olek Jarsen, a 59-year-old male human pig farmer

**Dragonborn Knight** **Level 17 Elite Soldier (Leader)**
Medium natural humanoid — XP 3,200

**HP** 326; **Bloodied** 163 — **Initiative** +10
**AC** 33, **Fortitude** 31, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 30 — **Perception** +13
**Speed** 5
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

**Threatening Reach**
The knight can make opportunity attacks against creatures within 2 squares of it.

**Standard Actions**

**Halberd** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +22 vs. AC. The knight has a +1 bonus to attack rolls while bloodied.
*Hit:* 2d10 + 14 damage, and the target falls prone.

**Cleaving Blade** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* The knight uses *halberd* twice.

**Cruel Sweep** (weapon) ✦ **Encounter**
*Effect:* Close burst 2 (enemies in the burst); the knight uses *halberd* against each target.

**Minor Actions**

**Dragon Breath** (fire) ✦ **Encounter**
*Attack:* Close blast 3 (enemies in the blast); +20 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 2d10 + 14 fire damage.

**Direct Ally** ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞
*Effect:* Ranged 10 (one ally). The target can move up to its speed or make a basic attack as a free action.

**Skills** Athletics +19, Intimidate +18
**Str** 22 (+14) — **Dex** 11 (+8) — **Wis** 11 (+8)
**Con** 19 (+12) — **Int** 16 (+11) — **Cha** 21 (+13)
**Alignment** unaligned — **Languages** Common, Draconic
**Equipment** plate armor, halberd

**3 Starwarped Sentinels** **Level 17 Skirmisher**
Medium natural humanoid, human — XP 1,600 each

**HP** 160; **Bloodied** 80 — **Initiative** +17
**AC** 31, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 28 — **Perception** +12
**Speed** 6

**Traits**

**Evasive**
The sentinel gains a +5 power bonus to all defenses while moving on its turn.

**Standard Actions**

**Morningstar** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +22 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d10 + 14 damage, plus 2d8 damage if the target is granting combat advantage to the sentinel.

**Crossbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 15 (one creature); +22 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d8 + 13 damage.

**Starlight Blink** (radiant, teleportation) ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞
*Effect:* The sentinel teleports up to 5 squares and makes the following attack.
*Attack:* Close burst 1 (enemies in the burst); +20 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* 2d12 + 12 radiant damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).

**Skills** Stealth +20
**Str** 21 (+13) — **Dex** 24 (+15) — **Wis** 8 (+7)
**Con** 16 (+11) — **Int** 11 (+8) — **Cha** 18 (+12)
**Alignment** evil — **Languages** Common
**Equipment** leather armor, morningstar, crossbow, 20 bolts

When a conjunction is nigh, the prisoners are taken to the roof of area 40, and the ritual that causes the prisoners to vanish and star spawn to appear in their places is performed.

### MINOR QUEST: RESCUE THE PRISONERS

**16th-level Minor Quest (280 XP/character)**

The characters earn this quest reward if they see all eight prisoners to safety.

## 36. Ilshaeren's Quarters

**Roleplaying Encounter or Combat Encounter**
**Level 16 (7,000 XP)**

This room belongs to Ilshaeren, the eladrin leader of the Order of the Endless Night.

**Door:** The door to this room is locked, requiring a DC 31 Thievery check to open. The door can also be forced open with a DC 31 Athletics check.

**Light:** None (unlit hanging lanterns).

**Monsters:** 5 elder mimics.

**Read:**

*This large chamber contains a handsomely carved oak table surrounded by six sturdy wooden chairs. An unmade bed is in one corner, a wide wardrobe at its foot. An ornate desk, also carved from oak, stands against one wall. Papers are scattered atop the desk and on the floor around it. Next to the desk is an iron trunk with clawed feet.*

Only one of the chairs situated around the table is an object. The five other chairs are mimics. See the "Conclave of Mimics" section below.

**Scattered Papers:** These pages, torn from a blank book, bear charcoal drawings of hideous creatures with eyes drawn as spirals. Anyone who succeeds on a DC 32 Dungeoneering check determines that these are someone's vain attempt to record Gibbeth's true form.

**Iron Trunk:** The trunk is unlocked and packed with Ilshaeren's journals and records, dating all the way back to the founding of Starhaunt and the Order of the Endless Night. At the top is the most recent journal, the cover and pages of which are smeared with Ilshaeren's blood. Unlike earlier volumes, this tome is full of lunatic ramblings and references to Gibbeth, Acamar, Hadar, and Allabar. The final entry, dated eleven months ago, reads "I hold this orb and these charts as the greatest gift the world will ever know."

Any character who takes a few hours to pore over Ilshaeren's writings learns the following.

- Before madness overcame Ilshaeren, he had great respect for Thulzar, the order's founder, and was thoroughly committed to protecting the world against evil star powers and their spawn.
- The meteorite that struck the observatory was split in half and came to rest in the catacombs. Ilshaeren removed an orb from the meteorite's core and realized it was an astrolabe. Initially he thought the orb was a gift from Ioun.
- As he studied the astrolabe, Ilshaeren began to have what he called waking nightmares. It is around this time that his journal entries become more intermittent and clipped.
- Two of the clerics at Starhaunt, Lannik (a priest of Bahamut) and Orvoth (a priest of Pelor), advised Ilshaeren to destroy the astrolabe. The third, Tormerian (a priest of Ioun), did not disagree but suggested they study it first. Ilshaeren suspected that Tormerian might steal the device and flee with it to some distant temple. Ilshaeren instructed Vaden (a skilled alchemist) to concoct a deadly poison, then ordered Linza to mix it with the priests' nightly wine.

**Conclave of Mimics:** Ilshaeren has enlisted five mimics to serve as his counselors, for they possess a remarkable understanding of all things aberrant. The mimics are intelligent, wise, and not immediately hostile toward intruders. They quietly observe anyone who enters Ilshaeren's quarters. A character who inspects a false chair can make a DC 31 Perception check to discern its true nature.

If the characters try to communicate with the mimics, the creatures listen. If any mimic is attacked, the creatures fight without mercy or reprieve.

If the mimics go unnoticed but ascertain that any character has a keen intellect, one of them reveals its true form and strikes up a conversation while the others maintain their disguises. The mimics are willing to share the following information.

- Ilshaeren is bent on learning Gibbeth's true form. He is wholly devoted to the menacing green star, which (according to myth) reveals its true form only at the end of the world.
- Given her temperament and ambition, Linza is likely conspiring to overthrow Ilshaeren. She will probably try to forge an alliance with Vaden, if she hasn't done so already, although Vaden is smart enough not to trust her.
- The mimics met Merik briefly. Ilshaeren introduced the sage to the conclave before leading him to the tower observatory. Merik found the mimics terrifying and could barely speak a word to them out of fear, much to their chagrin.
- Without the *eye of Allabar*, Ilshaeren cannot predict when Allabar will be in conjunction with the other evil stars. Ilshaeren keeps the astrolabe with him at all times, afraid that Linza or Vaden will turn on him if one of them obtains it.
- The mimics don't want the world to end, nor do they want to ruin Ilshaeren's plans. It's quite a conundrum—one the conclave has yet to solve.

The extent to which the mimics are willing to help the characters depends on their interactions with the party and the extent to which you want them involved. The mimics are not overly familiar with the layout of Starhaunt or its inhabitants, so most of what they know is limited to what Ilshaeren has told them.

If the characters deal with the mimics nonviolently, award them full experience for the encounter.

| 5 Elder Mimics | Level 16 Soldier |
|---|---|
| Medium aberrant magical beast | XP 1,400 each |
| **HP** 155; **Bloodied** 77 | **Initiative** +13 |
| **AC** 32, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 28 | **Perception** +14 |
| **Speed** 6 | Darkvision, tremorsense 5 |
| **Resist** 10 acid | |
| **Traits** | |
| **Ambush** | |
| If the mimic hits with an attack against a creature that is surprised, the mimic deals 10 extra damage. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Slam** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +21 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 3d8 + 11 damage, the mimic can pull the target 1 square, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 22). | |
| ⸸ **Acidic Bite** (acid) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature that is surprised or grabbed by the mimic); +21 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 3d8 + 13 damage, and ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends). | |
| **Minor Actions** | |
| **Shapeshift** (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will** (1/round) | |
| *Effect:* Without changing size, the mimic assumes one of the following forms. | |
| *Ooze Form:* The mimic becomes an ooze. When it squeezes while in this form, it moves at full speed rather than half speed, it doesn't take the -5 penalty to attack rolls, and it doesn't grant combat advantage for squeezing. | |
| *Object Form:* The mimic becomes an object, gaining resist 15 to all damage. While an object, the mimic is immobilized and can't attack. A creature must succeed on a DC 31 Perception check to notice that the mimic is a living creature. | |
| **Skills** Bluff +15, Dungeoneering +19, Stealth +16 | |
| **Str** 20 (+13) **Dex** 16 (+11) **Wis** 22 (+14) | |
| **Con** 19 (+12) **Int** 24 (+15) **Cha** 15 (+10) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Common, Deep Speech | |

# Tower (Areas 37–40)

Concerned that Linza and Vaden are plotting against him, Ilshaeren has confined himself to the tower observatory, where he enjoys the company of Merik the sage. Ilshaeren likes to stand at the hole in the tower wall (see area 39) and peer out over the fortress, keeping an eye on Linza and Vaden.

Ceilings in the tower are 15 feet high.

**When the characters see the tower, read:**
*The tower observatory has broken away from the main fortress and stands atop its own crag. The stone spire has three windowless floors and a flat roof surrounded by a battlement. Iron spikes thrust upward from the battlement like rusted talons grasping toward the sky.*

*An 8-foot-diameter hole gapes in the south wall. It looks as though some force trapped inside the tower finally punched its way to freedom.*

## 37. Tower Guard Post

**Encounter Level 15 (6,400 XP)**

Ilshaeren keeps a scion of Gibbeth and several starwarped initiates here to guard the tower against Linza and Vaden.

**Light:** Dim (wall braziers).

**Monsters:** 1 scion of Gibbeth, 16 starwarped initiates (all hidden behind an illusory wall). The scion of Gibbeth emerges from the illusory wall and attacks as soon as intruders enter this area.

**When the characters approach the tower, read:**
*Braziers mounted on the walls dimly illuminate an empty room. A stone staircase hugs one wall.*

**Illusory Wall:** The chamber's northern alcove and the two smaller rooms that hug the tower's northern wall are hidden behind an illusory wall. The illusion can be dispelled with a trained DC 32 Arcana check (as a standard action) but is otherwise permanent. The wall has no substance, so creatures and objects can pass through it, but contact with the wall does not dispel the illusion. As long as it persists, the illusory wall blocks line of sight but not line of effect. A creature adjacent to the wall can, on its turn, lean forward to peer through the wall as a free action, thus gaining line of sight.

**Northern Rooms:** Other than the initiates concealed here, these storage areas are empty.

**When the scion first attacks, read:**
*A fat, demonic green visage appears in the middle of the north wall, fixes its mad gaze upon you, and then attacks.*

| 16 Starwarped Initiates | Level 15 Minion Brute |
|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | XP 300 each |
| **HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | **Initiative** +9 |
| **AC** 27, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 27 | **Perception** +11 |
| **Speed** 6 | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Conjured Star Mace** (radiant, weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 14 radiant damage. | |
| ☉ **Eldritch Bolt** (force, implement) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +18 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 14 force damage. | |
| **Str** 11 (+7) **Dex** 15 (+9) **Wis** 9 (+6) | |
| **Con** 16 (+10) **Int** 10 (+7) **Cha** 15 (+9) | |
| **Alignment** evil **Languages** Common | |
| **Equipment** robes, rod | |

**Tactics:** After it starts battle, the scion of Gibbeth yells for reinforcements, calling forth the starwarped initiates. When called into battle, the initiates rush through the illusory wall in waves of four (two per room) every round beginning in the second round of combat. They do their best to keep enemies away from the scion of Gibbeth.

As long as it's within 5 feet of the illusory wall, the scion can lean forward into it or back away from as a free action on its turn. If the illusory wall is dispelled, the scion activates its *aura of revulsion* to discourage enemies from making melee and ranged attacks against it.

| **Scion of Gibbeth** | **Level 17 Controller** |
|---|---|
| Large aberrant humanoid | XP 1,600 |
| **HP** 163; **Bloodied** 81 | **Initiative** +11 |
| **AC** 31, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 27, **Will** 29 | **Perception** +11 |
| **Speed** 6 | Darkvision |

**Traits**

**Aura of Revulsion ✦ Aura** 10
Creatures in the aura cannot target the scion with melee or ranged attacks unless the scion is the nearest enemy.

**Standard Actions**

**Slam ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +22 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d10 + 14 damage.

**Mind-Splintering Gaze** (charm, gaze, psychic) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 20 (one creature); +20 vs. Will
*Hit:* 2d6 + 10 psychic damage, and the target is dominated (save ends).

**Triggered Actions**

**Gibbeth's Baleful Glare** (charm, psychic) **✦ At-Will**
*Trigger:* An enemy targets the scion with a melee attack or a ranged attack.
*Attack (Opportunity Action):* Ranged 20 (the triggering enemy); +20 vs. Will.
*Hit:* 1d8 + 8 psychic damage, and the scion slides the target up to 2 squares.

**Offering to Gibbeth** (charm) **✦ At-Will**
*Trigger:* A creature within 2 squares of the scion spends a healing surge.
*Effect (Immediate Reaction):* The scion gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

**Revelation of Gibbeth** (charm) **✦ Encounter**
*Trigger:* The scion drops to 0 hit points.
*Attack (No Action):* Close burst 5 (creatures in the burst); +20 vs. Will
*Hit:* The target is dazed and uses its standard action each turn to charge or to make a melee or ranged basic attack against its nearest ally (save ends).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 22 (+14) | **Dex** 16 (+11) | **Wis** 17 (+11) |
| **Con** 19 (+12) | **Int** 11 (+8) | **Cha** 19 (+12) |
| **Alignment** chaotic evil | **Languages** telepathy 10 | |

# 38. Starwarp Vortex

**Combat Encounter Level 17 (9,100 XP)**

A ritual designed to create star beckoners left something unpleasant behind.

**Light:** Bright (swirling magical vortex).
**Trap:** Starwarp vortex.
**Monsters:** 6 star wisps (invisible).

**Read:**
*A silent vortex of lurid energy fills this level of the tower. It churns counterclockwise, slowly, almost hypnotically, as if it's moving in slow motion. You feel a compulsion to move toward it.*

The star beckoner ritual succeeded, but the vortex that created them could not be dispelled. It occupies this entire area, and it has a driving will to corrupt all non-aberrant creatures.

**Tactics:** The star wisps wait invisibly about the room. They continually attack any enemy not dominated by the vortex.

## Development

If the starwarp vortex dominates all the characters, they become the vortex's thralls and join the ranks of the Order of the Endless Night. Whether and how they can escape this thralldom is up to you.

# 39. Meeting Room

**Combat Encounter Level 17 (8,800 XP)**

This level of the tower was once a meeting room.

**Light:** Dim (illuminated wall designs).

**Monsters:** Half the time, or if the party needs an easier climactic fight, Ilshaeren and his brood are present. Otherwise, they are on the roof (area 40). If monsters are present, they include Ilshaeren (voice

| **Starwarp Vortex** | **Level 16 Solo Trap** |
|---|---|
| Terrain | XP 7,000 |
| **Detect** – | **Initiative** +20 |
| **AC** 31; **Fortitude** –; **Reflex** 29; **Will** 30 | |
| **HP** 435 | |
| **Immune** poison, all conditions, attacks that target Fortitude, forced movement | |

**Traits**

**Insubstantial**
The vortex takes half damage from any damage source, except those that deal force damage or psychic damage.

**Space-Time Distortion**
Each square in the vortex costs 3 extra squares of movement to enter. The vortex slides any creature that ends its turn in the area up to 3 squares.

**Standard Actions**

**Attack** (charm, healing, psychic) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Close burst 1 (enemies in the burst); +22 vs. Will
*Hit:* 3d10 + 11 psychic damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points or fewer, the target remains conscious, spends a healing surge to regain hit points, and is dominated by the vortex until it is destroyed.

**Minor Actions**

**Aberrant Gift** (healing) **✦ At-Will** (1/round)
*Effect:* One creature dominated by the vortex spends a healing surge to regain hit points.

**Countermeasures**

- **✦ Communicate:** Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate DC 24 (standard action) or DC 33 (minor action). *Success:* The vortex does not attack the character until the start of the character's next turn.
- **✦ Endure:** Endurance DC 24 (standard action) or DC 33 (minor action). *Success:* If the character would take damage from the vortex, the damage is halved. The vortex cannot slide the character until start of his or her next turn.
- **✦ Oppose:** Arcana, Nature, or Religion DC 33 (standard action). *Requirement:* The character must be trained in the skill used. *Success:* The vortex takes 3d10 + 12 psychic damage. *Failure (28 or lower):* All enemies in the vortex take 10 psychic damage.

| 6 Star Wisps | Level 16 Minion Skirmisher |
|---|---|
| Small aberrant magical beast | XP 350 each |
| **HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | **Initiative** +17 |
| **AC** 30, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 27 | **Perception** +6 |
| **Speed** 0, fly 6 (hover; altitude limit 2) | Darkvision |
| **Immune** radiant | |
| **Traits** | |
| **Luminous** | |
| While not invisible, the wisp sheds bright light out to 10 squares. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Star Burn** (radiant) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +19 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 12 radiant damage. | |
| **Minor Actions** | |
| **Darken** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Effect:* The wisp becomes invisible until it takes a minor action to end the effect. While invisible, the wisp cannot attack. | |
| **Str** 2 (+4) **Dex** 24 (+15) **Wis** 6 (+6) | |
| **Con** 20 (+13) **Int** 3 (+4) **Cha** 21 (+13) | |
| **Alignment** evil **Languages** – | |

of Gibbeth) and Gibbeth's brood (4 carrion crawler hatchling swarms).

**Other Creatures:** Merik (human sage).

**Read:**

*The walls of this tower chamber are carved with intersecting lines that form constellations, with magically glowing pinpoints of light representing stars of every color. The room has a pair of tables surrounded by wooden chairs, one of which holds a shriveled old man. He stares off into space, drool oozing from one corner of his mouth.*

*A large hole has been punched through the ceiling, and part of the wall near this hole has crumbled away.*

**Tactics:** The voice of Gibbeth tries to teleport enemies outside the tower while raving on about his "great destiny." In addition to his own traits and powers, Ilshaeren can use the powers of the *eye of Allabar* (see that section) by using the orb with his

| 4 Carrion Crawler Hatchling Swarms | Level 15 Soldier |
|---|---|
| Medium aberrant beast (swarm) | XP 1,200 each |
| **HP** 145; **Bloodied** 72 | **Initiative** +9 |
| **AC** 31, **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 25 | **Perception** +6 |
| **Speed** 6, climb 6 | Darkvision |
| **Resist** half damage from melee and ranged attacks; **Vulnerable** 10 to close and area attacks | |
| **Traits** | |
| ☼ **Swarm Attack** (poison) ✦ **Aura** 1 | |
| Any enemy that starts its turn in the aura takes 10 poison damage. | |
| **Swarm** | |
| The swarm can occupy the same space as another creature, and an enemy can enter its space, which is difficult terrain. The swarm cannot be pulled, pushed, or slid by melee or ranged attacks. It can squeeze through any opening that is large enough for at least one of the creatures it comprises. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Tentacle Swarm** (poison) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +18 vs. Fortitude | |
| *Hit:* 2d6 + 10 poison damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). | |
| **Str** 7 (+5) **Dex** 11 (+7) **Wis** 9 (+6) | |
| **Con** 17 (+10) **Int** 1 (+2) **Cha** 11 (+7) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** – | |

powers. If hard pressed, Ilshaeren retreats to the roof to use the glyphs there.

When he drops to 0 hit points, Ilshaeren howls in anguish and bursts like a balloon, disgorging a carrion crawler hatching swarm that acts immediately. Any items Ilshaeren was carrying (including the *eye of Allabar*) fall amid his remains.

## Merik the Sage

The elderly man is Merik, and the things he has seen since his arrival at Starhaunt have rendered him catatonic. In this state, he is immobile and unresponsive. However, a DC 24 Heal check is enough to help him regain his senses.

Ilshaeren has kept Merik alive because he wants the old sage to bear witness to the end times. He has tried to keep Merik alive. In his madness, however,

| Voice of Gibbeth | Level 18 Elite Controller |
|---|---|
| Medium aberrant humanoid | XP 4,000 |
| **HP** 340; **Bloodied** 170 | **Initiative** +12 |
| **AC** 32, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 31 | **Perception** +16 |
| **Speed** 6 | Darkvision |
| **Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1 | |
| **Traits** | |
| ☼ **Whispers of Oblivion** ✦ **Aura** 2 | |
| Enemies in the aura take a –4 penalty to saving throws. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Warp Space** (teleportation) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +23 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* Ongoing 20 damage (save ends), and the voice teleports the target up to 5 squares. | |
| ⊕ **Psychic Anchor** (psychic) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +21 vs. Reflex | |
| *Hit:* 2d10 + 15 psychic damage, and the target is slowed and cannot teleport (save ends both). | |
| *First Failed Saving Throw:* The target is restrained instead of slowed (save ends both). | |
| **Double Attack** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Effect:* The voice makes two basic attacks. | |
| ⊹ **Glimpse of Gibbeth** (psychic) ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Attack:* Close burst 3 (enemies in the burst); +21 vs. Will | |
| *Hit:* 2d6 + 15 psychic damage, and the target is stunned until the end of the voice's next turn. | |
| *Miss:* Half damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the voice's next turn. | |
| **Triggered Actions** | |
| **Unexpected Innards** ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Trigger:* The voice drops to 0 hit points. | |
| *Effect:* The voice's body is destroyed, and a carrion crawler hatchling swarm appears in its space. The swarm acts immediately. | |
| **Skills** Arcana +20, Dungeoneering +16 | |
| **Str** 17 (+12) **Dex** 16 (+12) **Wis** 14 (+11) | |
| **Con** 18 (+13) **Int** 22 (+15) **Cha** 24 (+16) | |
| **Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** all | |

Ilshaeren forgot to provide Merik with basic needs, including food and water. Consequently, Merik is thirsty and famished, and until his needs are tended to, he is slowed and weakened. Once he can talk, Merik reveals the following information.

- "I knew something was amiss the instant I arrived. By the time I'd won an audience with Ilshaeren, it was clear that the Order of the Endless Night was behind the kidnappings I was investigating."
- "Linza and Vaden, two other members of the order, wanted to dispose of me, but Ilshaeren told them he wanted me to 'behold the One Great Truth before everything shrivels and dies.' I found out later that he was referring to Gibbeth's true form, which, accordingly to myth, can be seen only at the end of the world."
- "I met a conclave of shapeshifting monsters in Ilshaeren's quarters. These beings claimed to be his advisors, but I could not bear the sight of them!" (He is referring to the mimics in area 36.)
- "Ilshaeren showed me the orb that he uses to track the conjunctions of evil stars. He calls it the *eye of Allabar*, and it was borne to this place in a meteorite that struck this tower before continuing its final descent. Ilshaeren fears that Linza and Vaden might try to steal the orb from him."

Merik's survival and durability are up to you and the needs of your campaign if he becomes involved in combat. In any case, the old sage hides or flees rather than attacking.

## Ilshaeren, the Voice of Gibbeth

Ilshaeren looks like an elderly male eladrin in simple robes streaked with dried blood. His long hair has gone white, and he bleeds from the eyes whenever Gibbeth is visible in the night sky. Wherever he goes, "Gibbeth's brood" (swarms of carrion crawler hatchlings) follow.

The old eladrin has served as the leader of the order for decades. He fears that Linza and Vaden, his former apprentices, intend to usurp his position. Consequently, he has withdrawn to the tower to plan for the next conjunction and has forbidden them from entering unless summoned. Ilshaeren is excited because the next conjunction will be an alignment of Allabar and Gibbeth, and he prays that Gibbeth will send powerful allies to help him withstand any insurrection. He believes that only he has the skill to use the *eye of Allabar* and that Allabar has chosen him to bring about the end of the world.

**Treasure:** Ilshaeren carries an iron key that unlocks the door to his quarters (area 36) and a +4 *eye of Allabar*.

## Eye of Allabar

This hollow orb has a golden shell surrounding an astrolabe that allows someone trained in Arcana to predict when Allabar, the Wandering Star, will be in conjunction with other evil stars. It also functions as a powerful implement.

Allabar does not allow orbs such as these to fall into unwanted hands, but Allabar allows a non-evil creature to wield one if it thinks the owner is corruptible. If at any time Allabar believes that such an orb's powers are being misused, the star entity can cause the orb to crumble into stardust.

**Eye of Allabar** Level 15+ Rare

*This orb is an alien astrolabe that allows one to predict when evil stars will align.*

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lvl 15 | +3 | 25,000 gp | Lvl 25 | +5 | 625,000 gp |
| Lvl 20 | +4 | 125,000 gp | Lvl 30 | +6 | 3,125,000 gp |

**Implement:** Orb
**Enhancement Bonus:** Attack rolls and damage rolls
**Critical:** +1d8 radiant damage per plus

**Properties**

- If you are trained in Arcana and spend an hour studying the orb, you can determine when Allabar will be in conjunction with any other star you specify.
- You gain an item bonus to all defenses equal to this orb's enhancement bonus against the attacks of aberrant creatures that you have not hit or missed with an attack during a given encounter.

**Attack Power ✦ Daily** (No Action)
*Trigger:* You hit a target with an attack using this orb.
*Effect:* You instead score a critical hit against the target.

**Attack Power ✦ Daily** (No Action)
*Trigger:* With an attack using this orb, you miss a target and deal no damage to it.
*Effect:* The target takes half damage from the attack.

# 40. Rooftop Observatory

**Combat Encounter Level 17 (8,800 XP)**

From this vantage point, Ilshaeren and other members of the order studied the heavens, looking for portents among the stars and comets. This area is also where members of the order perform rituals to create star spawn.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Monsters:** If Ilshaeren and his brood are not encountered in area 39, they are found here. The battle here is more difficult because Ilshaeren can use the aberrant glyphs.

**Read:**
*The battlement enclosing the rooftop is set with 10-foot-tall rusted iron spikes, though one or two of them have broken off. Standing atop the roof is a 20-foot-tall stone statue of a stern humanoid, facing north, wearing a cloak and a cowl. The statue aims a chiseled rod at the sky. All around the statue, on the roof, are glyphs that pulse with green, blue, and purple energy. A gaping hole along one edge is evidence that something must have crashed into the tower. An iron railing encloses a staircase leading down.*

The tower roof is 50 feet high, 110 feet above the base of the rocky crag upon which it stands.

**Aberrant Glyphs:** These baleful signs can fill one's heart with a sense of foreboding. As a minor action, Ilshaeren can cause a glyph to emit a psychic pulse, using the following power.

**Minor Actions**
**Aberrant Glyph** (psychic) ✦ **At-Will** (1/round)
*Attack:* Close burst 1 centered on a glyph (non-aberrant creatures in the burst); +20 vs. Will
*Hit:* 2d6 + 7 psychic damage, and Ilshaeren can slide the target 1 square.

**Spikes:** The astronomers use the iron spikes on the battlement to track the progress of constellations and other celestial entities. Any character who inspects them closely can see measurement marks running the length of each spike.

**Statue:** The statue in the center of the observatory depicts Thulzar, Starhaunt's illustrious founder. At night, the statue's eyes glow like stars, although this is a magical trick. Apart from being an accurate likeness, the statue serves as a sundial. As its shadow tracks across the roof, one can accurately determine the time of day.

## Concluding the Adventure

The party's primary quest is to rescue Merik from Ilshaeren's clutches. Unless the Order of the Endless Night is stopped, however, the group will continue to pose a threat to the world. Only by taking out its leaders (Ilshaeren, Linza, and Vaden) and seizing the *eye of Allabar* can the adventurers end the threat.

Ilshaeren, Linza, and Vaden have been physically and mentally corrupted and cannot be saved or restored to their former selves. Other members of the order can be restored to sanity with the use of Remove Affliction rituals. Any members of the order so restored do their utmost to rebuild Starhaunt and reestablish the original order.

Characters who want to join the new Order of the Endless Night are free to do so and might even become its leaders. Merik shows no interest in joining the order. He has seen enough of Starhaunt and wants to return home.

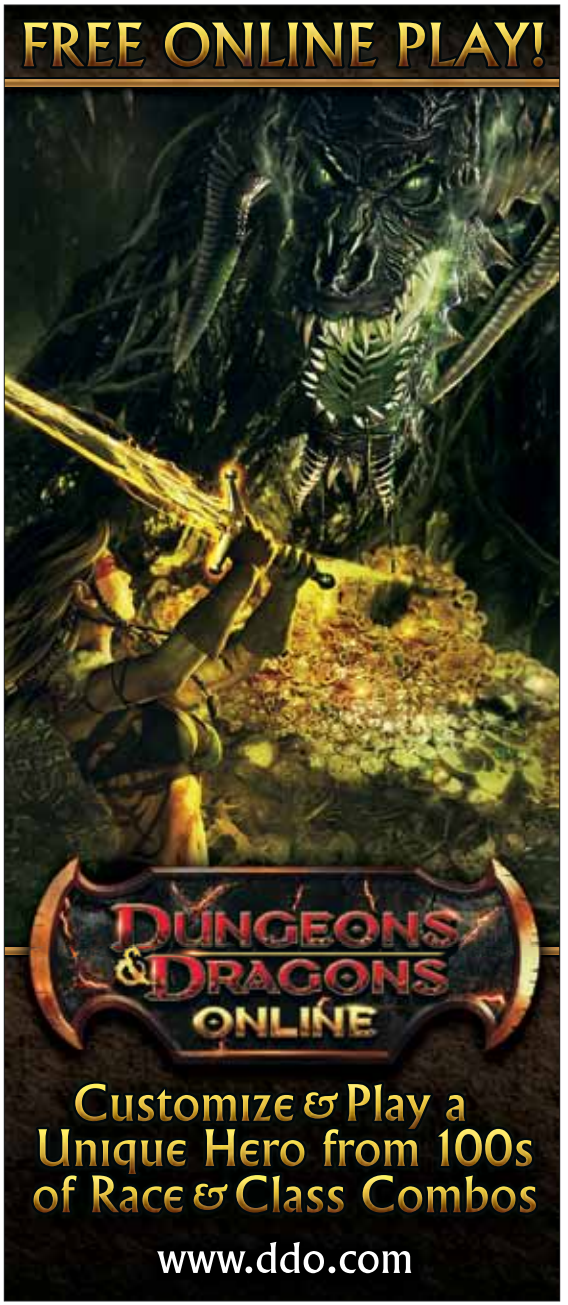
If the *eye of Allabar* is in the party's possession, Allabar works to corrupt the new owner. The character begins to hear whispers at night, urging him or her to gather sacrifices and perform secret rituals to summon new star spawn to the world.

Prisoners who escape from Starhaunt return home, bringing news of the party's heroism with them. The characters quickly gain a reputation throughout the realm for their dedication to opposing evil. This status might lead to other quests or opportunities.

### *About the Authors*

**Craig Campbell** is an architect by day and a D&D player, DM, and freelancer by night. He'd like to thank Allabar for inspiring this adventure.

**Christopher Perkins** has been fascinated by astronomy since he was a wee child. Not surprisingly, evil star powers play key roles in his current 4th Edition campaign.



# Domain of Dread:
# Timbergorge

*By Logan Bonner*

*Illustration by Ben Wootten*
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*"The land calls out to us. In all the battles between our kin and the native creatures, it is the land that truly suffers. Do we allow the legacy of hate and fire to endure, or do we make this land an oasis in the bleak wastes?"*
—Aptal, High Druid of the Sunlit Circle

In a forested river valley that never sees spring or summer, a malformed and murderous treant battles a clan of werewolves in a feud born out of tragedy. Fires surround every border of Timbergorge, and the smoke conceals the entire valley. Within the valley's confines, the weather is cold and the land bleak. Densely clustered conifers tower overhead, and the ground slopes toward a clear, frigid river. All seems serene and natural until the packs of werewolves engage in yet another battle with the savage treant Silvermaw. The werewolves want things to change. Some want Silvermaw dead, others want to escape, and others want to heal the land. Silvermaw sees only one course of action: The werebeasts must die so Timbergorge can belong to only the animals and the forest fey.

You can use Timbergorge at a variety of character levels. If you want the adventurers to have a chance of defeating Silvermaw, they should be high paragon tier. If you would rather they fight for survival alongside or against the werewolves, bring them in at high heroic tier.

## Birth of the Realm

The fey lord Aurusel once oversaw a vast domain in the Feywild composed of so many different woodlands, lakes, and meadows that it seemed to his eyes like a colossal garden. Aurusel's Garden remained unspoiled—no eladrin city invaded the forest, and no fomorian tunnel undermined the land's natural beauty. Guardians watched over each prized plot of land. As is the natural way of things, old guardians sometimes died so new guardians could rise in their place.

In this way, a young treant became the new guardian of a valley of densely packed conifers that Aurusel called the Green Quills. The treant had heard of the city-building fey and knew the danger they posed to the pure wilderness. The treant knew enough to be vigilant against such efforts if they should occur.

But the treant had heard nothing of humans.

From time to time, a part of Aurusel's Garden would undergo worldfall and appear in the natural realm. One day early in the treant's stewardship, the Green Quills experienced such a change. The treant, in its first exposure to a world outside the Feywild, was intrigued by a tribe of humans who entered its domain and asked to hunt game there. After examining these creatures, the treant invited them in. They looked like beasts in their furs, and they acted like beasts with their single-minded intention to hunt.

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They were clearly not eladrin or elves, and they said nothing of building cities.

Soon after granting these creatures permission to stay, the treant realized his mistake. He saw a plume of smoke trailing into the sky, masking the low red sun. As the treant rushed toward the source of the smoke, the trees all around it caught fire. The humans had chopped down several trees and started a bonfire, and now the intruders' flames were threatening to consume the Green Quills. The treant roared and chased the fleeing humans. As he rushed under the flaming branches, he too caught fire.

When the sun had fully set on that day, the Green Quills faded back to the Feywild—or attempted to. Seeing the blazing flames that lit the night sky, Aurusel stopped the forested valley from returning. He cut it from his demesne like rot from a piece of ripe fruit.

Yet the domain didn't return to the natural world. It was cut loose from any tethers that held it to either the natural world or the Feywild. It settled in the realm where so many places of despair and darkness find a home: the Shadowfell.

After being burned, the treant went on a rampage and killed several of the interlopers and their young, scattering the others throughout the forest. He then withdrew to his grove and lay dormant for a short time. He healed the worst of his burns and grew bitter as he dreamed of revenge.

While the treant was inactive, the humans became cursed with lycanthropy (a consequence of the treant's dark dreams, or as a result of being condemned to the Shadowfell) and took control of the treant's domain. They built a stockade around a settlement of log cabins, just in case the mad treant happened to return.

## A Dark Lord Emerges

When the treant awoke, he had been warped by shadow magic and thus transformed into the dark lord of this new domain of dread. The moment his eyes opened, the trees that encircled the valley erupted into flame. The inhabitants became surrounded and trapped, and the treant rampaged once more. The human settlement was destroyed, and the survivors were again scattered into the forest.

Now, the borders of the domain constantly blaze with magical fire that sends plumes of smoke high into the air above the realm's perimeter, blotting out the pallid sun of the Shadowfell, but the fire does not spread to the interior of the valley. The transformed humans call the scorched treant Silvermaw, and the land Timbergorge. They spar with Silvermaw over and over, and they want only to escape the hunting grounds that have become their prison.

## The Bleak Forest

One vast, deep river valley makes up all of Timbergorge. The steep slopes teem with ancient conifers dusted with ash. At the bottom winds the watercourse that the human werewolves call the Cold River, its clear waters slowly flowing from one end of the domain to the other.

All manner of beasts used to call the gorge home. Now, most of the other significant predators have been wiped out by the werewolves. The prey has further dwindled in numbers since Timbergorge's new cloud of smoke caused sources of food to start disappearing. So far, there has been enough food to support the people of the Metsuri clan, but they're about to run out of the few precious resources that remain.

## Lord of Timbergorge

*"Humans do not belong here. They ruin all they touch. May their corpses nourish the earth so they have some purpose."*

The grotesque dark lord of Timbergorge was once a peaceful treant who knew little of the world outside the idyllic Green Quills.

As he battled the humans after awakening, he discovered that they were afflicted with the curse of lycanthropy. Their lupine abilities made the battles with them far more difficult than the treant had expected. To combat them, he found some silver among the belongings the humans abandoned as they fled their newly built settlement. After melting the metal down, the treant poured it on the sharp branches around his mouth. The silver tines give him a weapon he uses to rip apart his hated enemies. These silver fangs caused the werewolves to name the treant Silvermaw.

The stench of death surrounds Silvermaw, and his hatred causes coal-black flowers to spring up wherever he steps, then quickly wilt. Though some of the dryads and other fey that share the land with him fear how morbid and cruel he has become, Silvermaw never sees his own darkness. He knows that he failed in his duty and that Aurusel has forsaken him; his fate is sealed. He never expects to have another carefree day. He wants only to kill all the werewolves, die in peace, and return to the earth.

## Silvermaw's Metamorphosis

When Timbergorge first burned, Silvermaw caught fire and almost died. He slipped into a dormant state, rooting himself to the earth and regrowing his charred body over time. The shadowy magic of the plane altered him as he hibernated, and his hate extended beyond him to encompass the whole of

## GETTING TO TIMBERGORGE

The residents of Timbergorge have so far been unable to escape, and entering the domain of dread isn't much easier than getting away from it. The adventurers might enter Timbergorge in one of the following ways.

**Aurusel's Demand:** The fey lord Aurusel once tended Timbergorge as part of his grand garden. Its place remains empty in his lands, so he might send the adventurers to discover its fate and see if it could be returned to his realm. He might demand that the adventurers slay the corrupted treant or chase off the werewolves.

**Up from the Darkness:** Underground tunnels of the Shadowdark run beneath Timbergorge, and adventurers could breach the surface inside the ring of fire. They might have to remain here to avoid subterranean pursuers or because hardy roots grow up quickly to seal the tunnels.

**Through Mist and Smoke:** The adventurers get lost in thick fog or in the smoke within a burning building or a forest fire. When they escape, they discover they've been transported to Timbergorge. A forbidding wall of red flames stands behind them.

Timbergorge. When he awoke, the land truly had become a domain of dread. Silvermaw's rage ignited the flaming border, and he struck down the fortifications and homes of the humans who had invaded his realm.

When he awoke from his dormancy, Silvermaw had not fully healed. His bark remains scarred, and the longer he spends out of hibernation, the worse his condition gets. He has even started rotting, and he remains in a state between life and undeath. Still, he refuses to return to dormancy. Doing that would mean abandoning his pursuit of revenge.

## The Spires of Lost Friends

Silvermaw keeps a gruesome memorial to the forest he lost. The first one hundred trees that burned never recovered, nor did they fall over. Their blackened, limbless trunks still stand proudly among an ashen wasteland. Silvermaw calls this swath of devastation the Spires of Lost Friends to commemorate the trees he once knew.

When Silvermaw defeats one of the werewolves, he impales the body on one of the spires. If he can do so, he takes an enemy captive; better that the intruder be made to suffer and die upon a wooden stake. With the ability to regenerate, a werewolf might remain alive for days, writhing in agony and coating the blackened tree with streams of blood.

Some of the bodies on the spires are so old they've been reduced almost to skeletons; others remain fresh, and some are still alive. Silvermaw wants every tree to have at least one body speared onto it. The howls of the dying are one of the few sounds that make him feel at peace.

The Metsuri clan considers the impalement of its members to be a grave blasphemy. Whenever the werewolves can, they help their dying comrades escape rather than let Silvermaw claim them. On the rare occasions when Silvermaw goes on the hunt elsewhere in his domain, bold members of the clan undertake a mission to retrieve bodies from the spires and properly bury them according to clan customs.

## The Metsuri Clan

The wandering trappers who first entered the Feywild, the Metsuri clan, have all become werewolves. The leader, Patriarch Kolegg, believes that Silvermaw cursed the clan out of spite. It's more likely that the same strange trick that sent the valley into the Shadowfell also transformed the humans to better fit the wilderness born of the Feywild. No clan members other than Kolegg speak of the curse when they can avoid it.

Imprisoned with their murderous foe, the Metsuri live in a nomadic tent-village so they can move around quickly when they need to avoid Silvermaw's wrath. During the time Silvermaw was dormant, they cut some wood and made simple permanent dwellings—only to have them wrecked when Silvermaw awoke and attacked them on their homestead. Everything they had built fell apart, and they've been on the run ever since.

Three generations of Metsuri live in Timbergorge. Kolegg of the eldest generation was in charge when the clan entered this part of Aurusel's Garden, and he still leads. Many of the younger Metsuri, of a more peaceable nature than Kolegg, have strong objections to his orders, but the most powerful warriors remain loyal to Kolegg. Most of the common citizens in the

## PLAYING A METSURI

Playing a member of the werewolf clan could be an interesting challenge. You can use this domain to bring a new player into your group, or to replace a dead or retired character of one of your existing players.

The people of the Metsuri clan have strong familial bonds and are skilled at living off the land. Most of the Metsuri have a practical streak and do whatever they must to live a comfortable life. This might include leaving the clan to find riches through adventuring.

Metsuri werewolves are best suited to be druids, rangers, or axe-wielding barbarians. For race, the player can pick shifter and re-skin it as a human werewolf. A primal class that has transformation powers (such as the druid with *beast form*) could give the feeling of playing a werewolf while still using the human race.

clan fear that if they outwardly oppose Kolegg, they'll lose the protection of the clan's guards and scouts and find themselves at the mercy of Silvermaw.

## Patriarch Kolegg

*"Chop down every cursed tree. Burn Silvermaw to a pile of charcoal. If you want freedom, you'll fight for your clan."*

Before the clan came into Aurusel's Garden, the Metsuri were a belligerent tribe, and Kolegg was the leader by virtue of his prowess as a warrior. When the Metsuri adopted a hunting and homesteading lifestyle in the Feywild, Kolegg grew restless. The sedentary life didn't suit him, and going into battle again in this war with Silvermaw has renewed his purpose. It is clear to Kolegg that to avoid extinction, the tribe must destroy the treant.

Furthermore, Kolegg believes that if the clan kills Silvermaw, the fires will subside and summer will come once again to this realm. There's no evidence to support this view, but everyone in the clan knows that the treant's return caused the eternal flames to rise, so most of them believe he might be right. For Kolegg, there's no "might" about it—he's absolutely certain that killing Silvermaw is the only way to save Timbergorge and bring his clan back to prosperity.

Kolegg is a gruff, decisive man with battle scars and a limp from an injured left leg. His wounds don't trouble him when he's in hybrid or wolf form, so he rarely fights as a human. Kolegg can be a bully, and he transforms into hybrid form and snarls at those who disagree with him.

The best warriors in the clan form Kolegg's troop of guardians. Most of them are closely related to him. His oldest son, Tuleth, is second in command, and his youngest daughter and son also fight alongside the troop. When his daughter, Aptal, started the Sunlit Circle, Kolegg disowned her and banished her from the clan. He sometimes misses his daughter, but keeps such feelings to himself.

### Missions from Kolegg

Most of all, the patriarch wants Silvermaw dead so his clan can rule Timbergorge. In addition, he has other areas of concern that the heroes can address.

**Retrieve the Fallen:** Kolegg believes that the Metsuri clanfolk whom Silvermaw has impaled on trees deserve a better fate. He might ask the characters to reach the Spires of Lost Friends and pull the bodies down so they can be buried properly.

**Find Silvermaw's Grove:** The clan has found it impossible to take the battle to Silvermaw by meeting it in the place where it dwells. Every time a band of Metsuri crosses the river south of the spires, the treant rushes from the wilderness to attack, never coming from the same direction twice. Kolegg thinks that if the Metsuri knew where Silvermaw's grove was located, they could ambush the treant with a proper, well-equipped fighting force.

## Tikmek the Bold

*"The clan will die out if we can't find new husbands and wives. This is no place for anyone to live. We must get past the flames and find our people in the lands beyond."*

Tikmek, Kolegg's niece, doesn't think fighting will fix anything. Silvermaw might die, but it won't be worth the cost in Metsuri lives. Instead, Tikmek wants to help the whole clan escape from Timbergorge. She thinks that the Cold River passes through to the world outside. No one can confirm this as fact, since a wall of steam rises from the river, right next to the flaming border. Nevertheless, Tikmek has dedicated herself to building an enormous raft to take all the Metsuri out at once in a daring escape attempt.

The process, though it has barely begun, has been fraught with setbacks. The first two loads of wood that were cut for the watercraft were destroyed in attacks by Silvermaw, who believed that the trees were being harvested to build homesteads. Now, on her third attempt, Tikmek has taken great pains to conceal the woodcutting activity and works only when she's sure she isn't being watched.

### Missions from Tikmek

Finishing the raft and getting the whole clan to agree to the escape attempt are the only things Tikmek cares about. Helping Tikmek might seem like a heroic thing to do from the characters' standpoint, but letting a whole clan of werewolves out into the larger world—even in the already grim Shadowfell—could have far-reaching consequences.

**Keep Silvermaw Distracted:** If the treant finds the wood that has been cut for the raft, he will certainly destroy it just as he has done in the past. In the final stages, when the raft is lashed together, it will be vitally important to draw his attention far from the river.

**Salvage Tools from the Homestead:** Tikmek doesn't have the tools she could use to make the process easier. There are saws, hammers, rope, and other useful supplies in the wrecked homestead where the Metsuri used to live. Silvermaw frequently patrols there, however, and so Tikmek can't safely get the tools without help.

### METSURI GUARDIANS AND WARRIORS

The guardians of the clan serve Kolegg, and they're far more powerful than most clan members. For younger or less experienced trappers, use the frenzied werewolf statistics from *Monster Vault*™. Most of the Metsuri are unaligned instead of evil.

# The Sunlit Circle

Though they were born to the Metsuri clan, the druids of the Sunlit Circle no longer consider themselves part of the family. Aptal and the other druids among the Metsuri settlers don't want to escape or to rule Timbergorge—they want to restore it to the way it was when it was a portion of Aurusel's Garden. They can tell that Timbergorge's current state is unnatural, and they try to use their magic to bring back the dead trees and grass.

So far, the Sunlit Circle has been fighting an uphill battle. The clashes between the other Metsuri and Silvermaw's guardians set back the druids' efforts every time. Though the druids realize their task would be easier without these other factions, they would rather help the sides find peace than to have them killed. They believe that they could even heal Silvermaw if they could get the treant's permission—or take it captive. Healing the dark lord would ensure that the land could return from the brink of death.

The circle druids spend most of their time in wolf form, wandering as a pack throughout the valley.

## Aptal, High Druid

*"Hate rules Timbergorge. This land is not doomed, it is in pain! To find the path, our people must set aside our axes to take up our plowshares and nurture the land."*

The estranged daughter of Patriarch Kolegg, Aptal leads the Sunlit Circle. She seems warm and nurturing, especially when discussing the flora and fauna of Timbergorge. When the topic turns to her father, she quickly turns bitter. Their thoughts on how to deal with their imprisonment in Timbergorge have led them down diametrically opposed paths. She thinks he's a fool, and he feels the same about her.

Despite her disagreements with the other Metsuri, Aptal helps them when they're truly in need. The last time the Metsuri had an unsuccessful hunt, they were amazed to find a slain deer in the middle of their camp when they rose the next morning. They thanked Melora for this miracle, but it was Aptal who saved them from hunger.

## Missions from the Druids

The diplomatic, nature-loving druids of the Sunlit Circle want to restore Timbergorge. They hope they can do so by healing Silvermaw. But if that doesn't work, they might have to destroy him before they can set things right.

**Seek the Advice of the Dryads:** The druids know of the ashen dryads and believe the dryads could show them how to heal the treant. Getting an audience with the dryads is difficult, and the druids made mistakes the first time they tried. They could use a third party to open the discussion again.

**Capture Silvermaw:** The druids don't need Silvermaw's permission to heal the treant, but they don't have the fighting power to take him down. They ask the adventurers to bring Silvermaw to them alive before Kolegg can get to the treant and kill him.

# The Ashen Dryads

*"Leave this grove, mortals, and return at your peril. Do not ask our counsel again. Silvermaw's will is his own, and until he does us harm we will have no part in his war—on either side."*

Silvermaw keeps his own counsel for the most part, but a few dryads he knew from Aurusel's Garden can still reach him even through his rage and despair. These dryads once numbered in the hundreds, but only a dozen or fewer remain. Living in the smoke-shrouded Timbergorge has changed their appearance. Their woody flesh has turned gray or black, and when they take on an elf guise they look frostbitten and pale.

### DRYADS

Silvermaw's dryad compatriots are mostly dryad hunters and dryad witches from *Monster Vault*. Lower-level characters in Timbergorge might battle the dryads instead of Silvermaw.

The ashen dryads passively observe but rarely take action. They see the devastating battles between Silvermaw and the werewolves, and some of their sisters have died due to the actions of both sides. They miss the Silvermaw of old, and they fear what he has become. Still, they stay silent.

Silvermaw can't give the dryads orders, and they don't speak with the werewolves. They have so far refused to take sides, though frequently have come close to interceding. Their innate desire to be left alone has grown even stronger due to the constantly bleak environment, their malaise a consequence of living in the Shadowfell.

# Locations in Timbergorge

The Cold River and the valley that surrounds it make up only a small portion of Timbergorge's area. The dense trees and steep terrain make travel slow and visibility poor. Clouds and trails of smoke are everywhere, and travelers tire quickly from inhaling smoke and ash.

**1. Flaming Border:** The ring of flame that surrounds Timbergorge never extinguishes or weakens. Smoke constantly billows into the sky above, rising as far as the eye can see. Even approaching the border can scorch a traveler, and trying to pass through the

flame without protection would melt the flesh from one's bones.

**2. Cold River:** A crystal-clear river flows from the south end of Timbergorge to the north. Both ends are concealed by steam or mist—no one has ventured close enough to find out for sure. Rocks and shallows make it difficult to navigate with anything bigger than a kayak or canoe.

**3. Old Metsuri Homestead:** The original homestead the Metsuri made while Silvermaw was dormant no longer stands. Silvermaw destroyed it, and he comes back often to make sure no humans have taken up residence. Clan heirlooms and treasures remain here, buried under the wreckage. The Metsuri are too cautious or superstitious to try finding the old relics themselves.

**4. Spires of Lost Friends:** These dead trees serve as a warning for the Metsuri clan and a memorial to the trees Silvermaw failed to protect. Bodies in various states of decomposition are stuck on some of the trees, impaled there by Silvermaw.

**5. Face of Aurusel:** This stone cliff looms over the Cold River. It looks roughly like a face—one the fey say is the visage of Aurusel, the fey lord. Members of the Sunlit Circle bring offerings before the face, and believe they can talk to the land through it. Silvermaw believes Aurusel judges him, and that the stone frowns upon him. When he finally kills all the humans, the stone will smile once again.

**6. Silvermaw's Grove:** Silvermaw lives in a secluded, secret grove. The Metsuri haven't yet found its location, so it's the one place where Silvermaw feels safe from assault. When he's not on the warpath, Silvermaw stands in the center of the grove, sulking and pondering his next move.

**Metsuri Camp:** Not shown on the map, the Metsuri camp moves frequently. The tent village often splits into smaller groups to help ensure everyone's safety. Traveling in large numbers would make it easier for Silvermaw to track them.

# New Monsters

**Silvermaw, Dark Lord of Timbergorge** — **Level 21 Elite Brute**
Huge fey magical beast (plant), treant — XP 6,400

**HP** 486; **Bloodied** 243 — **Initiative** +11
**AC** 33, **Fortitude** 34, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 33 — **Perception** +17
**Speed** 8 (forest walk) — Low-light vision
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

☼ **Blanket of Black Flowers** (necrotic) ✦ **Aura** 1
An enemy that ends its turn in the aura takes 10 necrotic damage, or 15 necrotic damage if Silvermaw is bloodied.

**Wooden Body**
Whenever Silvermaw takes fire damage, he also takes ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

**Resilient Nature**
If Silvermaw begins his turn affected by an effect that a save can end, he can make a saving throw against it. For each such saving throw he attempts, he takes 5 damage.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Silver Bite** ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +26 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d8 + 13 damage, and ongoing 10 damage (save ends).
*Special:* Silvermaw's teeth are silvered.

⊕ **Slam** ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 3 (one creature); +26 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d12 + 16 damage.

↟ **Double Attack** ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* Silvermaw makes two basic attacks.

**Minor Actions**

✧ **Grasping Vines** ✦ **Recharge** when first bloodied
*Attack:* Close burst 5 (enemies in the burst); +24 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* 2d8 + 6 damage, and Silvermaw pulls the target up to 5 squares.

**Triggered Actions**

↟ **Vengeful Slam** ✦ **At-Will**
*Trigger:* An enemy within 3 squares of Silvermaw bloodies him or scores a critical hit against him.
*Effect (Immediate Reaction):* Silvermaw uses *slam* against the triggering enemy.

**Str** 26 (+18) — **Dex** 12 (+11) — **Wis** 25 (+17)
**Con** 23 (+16) — **Int** 20 (+15) — **Cha** 8 (+9)

**Alignment** evil — **Languages** Common, Elven

**Patriarch Kolegg** — **Level 18 Soldier (Leader)**
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger), human — XP 2,000

**HP** 170; **Bloodied** 85 — **Initiative** +18
**AC** 34, **Fortitude** 31, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 28 — **Perception** +18
**Speed** 6 (8 in wolf form) — Low-light vision

**Traits**

☼ **Blood Pack** ✦ **Aura** 5
Allies in the aura gain a +5 power bonus to damage rolls made against bloodied creatures.

**Regeneration**
Kolegg regains 10 hit points whenever he starts his turn and has at least 1 hit point. When Kolegg takes damage from a silvered weapon, his regeneration does not function on his next turn.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will**
*Requirement:* Kolegg must be in wolf or hybrid form.
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +23 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d10 + 10 damage. At the end of the encounter, the target makes a saving throw. On a failure, the target contracts werewolf moon frenzy (stage 1).

⊕ **Greataxe** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Requirement:* Kolegg must be in human or hybrid form.
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +23 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d12 + 13 damage.
*Effect:* The target is marked by Kolegg (save ends).

↟ **Blood Rage** ✦ **Recharge** when first bloodied
*Requirement:* Kolegg must be in hybrid form.
*Effect:* Kolegg uses *greataxe* and *bite*.

**Minor Actions**

**Change Shape** (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* Kolegg alters his form to appear as a Medium wolf, unique human, or hybrid until he uses *change shape* again or until he drops to 0 hit points. He retains his statistics in his new form. His clothing, armor, and other possessions do not change.

**Triggered Actions**

↟ **Pack Leader's Protection** ✦ **At-Will**
*Trigger:* An enemy adjacent to Kolegg makes an attack against one of Kolegg's allies.
*Effect (Immediate Interrupt):* Kolegg uses *greataxe* or *bite* against the triggering enemy.

**Str** 25 (+16) — **Dex** 24 (+16) — **Wis** 18 (+13)
**Con** 18 (+13) — **Int** 12 (+10) — **Cha** 16 (+12)

**Alignment** unaligned — **Languages** Common
**Equipment** hide armor, greataxe

**Sunlit Circle Werewolf** — **Level 6 Controller**
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger), human — XP 250

**HP** 70; **Bloodied** 35 — **Initiative** +6
**AC** 20, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 18 — **Perception** +12
**Speed** 6 (8 in wolf form) — Low-light vision

**Traits**

**Regeneration**
The werewolf regains 5 hit points whenever it starts its turn and has at least 1 hit point. When the werewolf takes damage from a silvered weapon, its regeneration does not function on its next turn.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will**
*Requirement:* The werewolf must be in wolf or hybrid form.
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d6 + 7 damage. At the end of the encounter, the target makes a saving throw. On a failure, the target contracts werewolf moon frenzy (stage 1).

⊘ **Scalding Sunlight** (radiant) ✦ **At-Will**
*Requirement:* The werewolf must be in human or hybrid form.
*Attack:* Ranged 5 (one creature); +9 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 2d6 + 7 radiant damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of the werewolf's next turn.

✧ **Sun Flash** (radiant) ✦ **Encounter**
*Requirement:* The werewolf must be bloodied and in human or hybrid form.
*Attack:* Close burst 2 (enemies in the burst); +9 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 1d6 + 4 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of the werewolf's next turn.

**Minor Actions**

**Change Shape** (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* The werewolf alters its form to appear as a Medium wolf, unique human, or hybrid until it uses *change shape* again or until it drops to 0 hit points. It retains its statistics in its new form. Its clothing, armor, and other possessions do not change.

**Skills** Nature +12
**Str** 12 (+4) — **Dex** 16 (+6) — **Wis** 19 (+7)
**Con** 14 (+5) — **Int** 12 (+4) — **Cha** 10 (+3)

**Alignment** unaligned — **Languages** Common, Elven
**Equipment** hide armor

| **Metsuri Guardian** | **Level 16 Brute** |
|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger), human | XP 1,400 |
| **HP** 194; **Bloodied** 97 | **Initiative** +14 |
| **AC** 28, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 26 | **Perception** +17 |
| **Speed** 6 (8 in wolf form) | Low-light vision |

**Traits**

**Regeneration**

The guardian regains 10 hit points whenever it starts its turn and has at least 1 hit point. When the guardian takes damage from a silvered weapon, its regeneration does not function on its next turn.

**Standard Actions**

**Bite** ✦ **At-Will**

*Requirement:* The guardian must be in wolf or hybrid form.
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +21 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d10 + 14 damage, and the target falls prone. At the end of the encounter, the target makes a saving throw. On a failure, the target contracts werewolf moon frenzy (stage 1).

**Greataxe** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**

*Requirement:* The guardian must be in human or hybrid form.
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +21 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d12 + 17 damage.

**Minor Actions**

**Change Shape** (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will**

*Effect:* The guardian alters its form to appear as a Medium wolf, unique human, or hybrid until it uses *change shape* again or until it drops to 0 hit points. It retains its statistics in its new form. Its clothing, armor, and other possessions do not change.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 25 (+15) | **Dex** 23 (+14) | **Wis** 18 (+12) |
| **Con** 24 (+15) | **Int** 10 (+8) | **Cha** 12 (+9) |

**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Common
**Equipment** greataxe

## *About the Author*

**Logan Bonner's** 4th Edition credits include *The Slaying Stone*™ and *Monster Vault*™ among many others. He lives in the Seattle area and now works at Paizo Publishing. You can follow him on Twitter, where he's @loganbonner.

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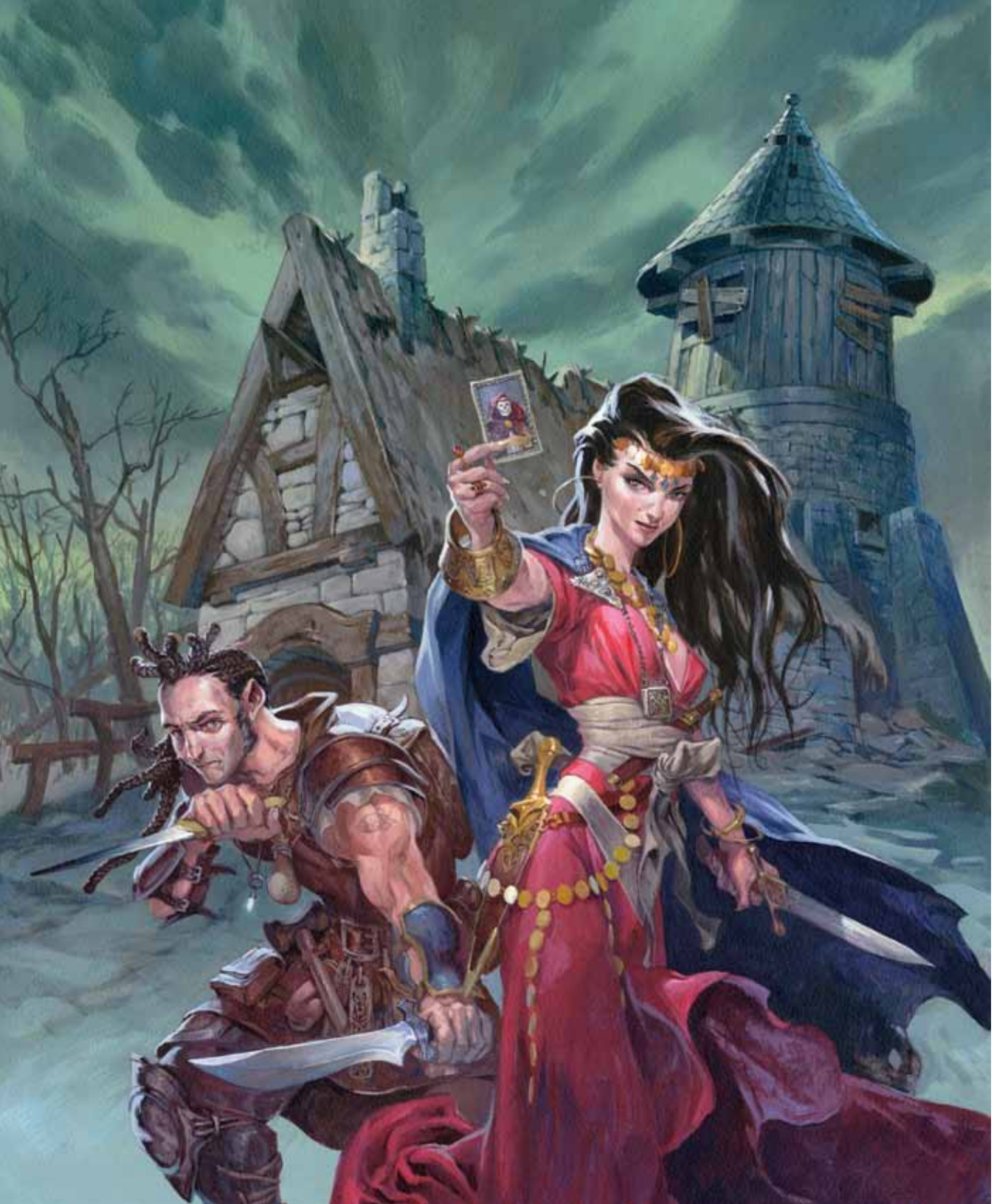

# Fair Barovia

**A D&D® adventure for characters of levels 5–7**

*By Claudio Pozas*

*Illustrations by Jesper Ejsing and Anna Christenson*

*Cartography by Jason A. Engle, Kyle Hunter, and Mike Schley*

Count Strahd von Zarovich has ruled the domain of Barovia for many long years, and generations of Barovians have suffered under his terrible reign. They eke out a harsh existence, sequestered in their dreary homes beneath the long, dark shadow of Castle Ravenloft, Strahd's towering fortress. From time to time, adventurers are drawn to the haunted halls of Castle Ravenloft to slake the count's thirst for blood. Few survive. Occasionally the vampire lord will let one of his "guests" escape, but only after much torment, and only after terror has driven the poor adventurer mad. The people of Barovia tell stories about strangers who came to Barovia in search of glory, only to be chased through the Svalich Woods by Strahd's wolves and driven into the darkest reaches of Strahd's domain, never to be seen or heard from again.

"Fair Barovia" is a Dungeons & Dragons® adventure for characters of levels 5–7. It is inspired by the Ravenloft® campaign setting and speaks of

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characters and lore first introduced in the AD&D® adventure module I6 *Ravenloft*™, written by Tracy and Laura Hickman.

## Using This Adventure

Rather than focus on Strahd and his castle (as past adventures have done), "Fair Barovia" focuses on other people and places within Strahd's dark domain. The adventure describes the large burg of Vallaki, the small village called Barovia (which shares the name of the domain), and several other important landmarks. Player characters drawn into this adventure will discover many dangers in Barovia aside from the vampire count and his fearsome abode.

In addition to the main plot (see "Adventure Background," below), this adventure presents a number of side quests that player characters can gather by interacting with various nonplayer characters (NPCs) in the town of Vallaki and the village of Barovia. You are encouraged to further develop these settlements and NPCs to suit your campaign. Throughout this adventure, "Dread Secret" sidebars reveal hidden information about Barovia and its denizens. Use or ignore this information as you see fit. Barovia is, after all, your playground.

## Adventure Background

For ages, the valleys and hills of Barovia have been settled by hardy folk who have endured and outlived conquerors and despots. The armies of the von Zarovich family, under the command of the great warrior Strahd (eldest son of King Barov and Queen Ravenia), swept through the land, routing the despotic Tergs and slaying the warlord Dorian with brutal efficiency, finally bringing peace to the beleaguered land.

Upon conquering Barovia, Strahd renamed Dorian's fortress Castle Ravenloft (after his mother). With his deceased parents' estates safe in the hands of his scholarly brother Sturm, Strahd settled in Barovia as its ruler. He refused to take the title of king, claiming that was his father's title, and declared himself a count. After decades of warfare, Strahd had become strict and ruthless in his application of the law, but otherwise allowed the Barovians to live their lives without interference. When Strahd's younger brother Sergei moved to Castle Ravenloft, many hoped that his youthful demeanor and pious heart would lighten Strahd's mood. Alas, his arrival had the opposite effect. The brothers both fell in love with the same woman, a beautiful peasant girl named Tatyana, but it was the younger Sergei who won her heart. Strahd took the news of their marriage like a stake through the heart.

On the day of Sergei and Tatyana's wedding, Strahd murdered his brother and pursued the grieving bride until she flung herself from the walls of Castle Ravenloft. Strahd was slain by the castle guards but rose as a vampire, cursed by the dark powers of Ravenloft for his hand in the deaths of Sergei and Tatyana.

"The devil Strahd" (as he is now known to many Barovians) became a true darklord, imbued with far greater powers than the typical creature of the night. A thick wall of mist surrounds the valley in which his castle and the nearby village of Barovia are situated. Only the Vistani (gypsies who haunt the Shadowfell) seem capable of passing through the mists, though many believe this is because of a dark pact with Strahd and not some higher power. Others who try to escape are turned back, unable to leave without Strahd's consent.

Strangers drawn to Castle Ravenloft or the village of Barovia have little chance of escaping. To do so, visitors either must convince Strahd to let them go, or hope that by destroying Strahd they can win their freedom. Over the years, Barovians have seen many adventurers come and very few leave.

The player characters are drawn to the land of Barovia like so many adventurers before them. On this occasion, Strahd has need of their assistance. The darklord knows (through his many spies) that the leader of the Ba'al Verzi, a secret society of assassins, has infiltrated his domain. Strahd plans to use adventurers to hunt down and dispose of the Ba'al Verzi assassin before he strikes. The assassin is none other than Leo Dilysnia, who served under Strahd during his final days as a mortal. Leo attempted to overthrow Strahd on the day of Sergei and Tatyana's wedding, and his henchmen were responsible for many deaths that night. Leo fled and went into hiding for half a century, but Strahd eventually discovered his whereabouts and exacted his vengeance. He turned Leo into a vampire and had him buried inside a tomb, so he would starve for eternity. Strahd now believes that Leo has returned to seize control of Castle Ravenloft. In fact, Leo has no hope of overthrowing Strahd by himself, but the assassin is gathering his strength and allies.

Strahd could eliminate Leo himself, but the vampire lord takes perverse delight in using assassins to slay an assassin—Leo deserves no better. Plus, Leo has taken refuge in a place that Strahd finds abhorrent: the White Sun Monastery, which stands in a remote corner of Barovia. The monks there have never opposed Strahd openly, but they've fortified the monastery with rituals designed to weaken Strahd should he deign to enter. Leo learned about the monastery from traveling Vistani and has taken it as his lair.

Although no match for Strahd, Leo Dilysnia is not one to be trifled with. His training and undead nature make him a deadly adversary. The vampire assassin slipped into Barovia disguised as a monk named Brother Henrik and reached the White Sun Monastery before Strahd's forces could stop him. He has since transformed some of the monks into

vampire spawn and trapped several more, including the abbot. Strahd's spies in Vallaki have learned all there is to know about "Brother Henrik," and their instructions are to point the player characters in the right direction without arousing suspicion. Strahd has given strict orders: The adventurers must not realize they're working for him!

If the adventurers destroy Leo Dilysnia, Strahd's spies send word to their master, who, in turn, provides the helpful adventurers with a means of escape. But Strahd's generosity has limits. The player characters must decide then and there to leave Barovia, or else remain trapped by the mists like everyone else.

## Synopsis

The characters are drawn to the land of Barovia—Strahd's domain of dread. (For more information on domains of dread, see *Manual of the Planes*™, page 51, and the *The Shadowfell: Gloomwrought and Beyond*™ boxed set.) A dirt road leads them to the town of Vallaki. Through interactions with the townsfolk, the characters have an opportunity to perform several quests that establish their reputation as brave adventurers. Once they have proven themselves, spies in the employ of Count Strahd von Zarovich point them in the direction of the White Sun Monastery, where "Brother Henrik" is holed up. Once the vampire-assassin Leo Dilysnia is destroyed, arrangements are made to send the adventurers on their way. Two of Strahd's allies in Vallaki, a Vistani seer named Arabelle Zarovan and a halfling guide named Falstan Mitrache, urge the adventurers to leave Barovia. The count himself sends a carriage to transport them to the edge of his domain. If they refuse this gift, the count shows them no further generosity and might dispose of them at some later time.

### Dread Secret: The Master of Ravenloft

In the centuries since becoming a vampire, Strahd has taken care to periodically fake his own demise and ascend to the throne anew as his own heir. Strahd I is still widely revered throughout Barovia for freeing the realm from the Terg invaders, but every subsequent "heir" is seen as having fallen farther and farther from Strahd I's legendary status—in no small part due to Strahd's own dwindling humanity.

Thanks to this charade, few Barovians realize that "the devil Strahd" is an actual vampire—although rumors abound of his dabbling in necromancy and other dark arts. To most denizens, the current ruler of the realm is simply Strahd XI.

## Barovian Geography

Barovia is a small municipality nestled in the Balinok Mountains. The weather is cold for most of the year, with long winters and snow that lasts well into spring. Barovia's terrain is marked by ridges, cliffs, and outcroppings that make off-road travel difficult if not downright foolish. This rugged landscape is almost entirely blanketed by sprawling woodlands of aspens, firs, and pines wreathed in mist. The twisting terrain, coupled with the dark woodlands and cold weather, has claimed more lives in Barovia than any monstrous creature, making the Old Svalich Road the lifeline of Barovia.

The most dramatic features of the Balinok Mountains are the twin summits of Mount Baratak and Mount Ghakis, cleaved apart by the narrow Svalich Pass. On the western side of the pass lies a valley containing Lake Zarovich. Here, the weather isn't as unforgiving, and the rough terrain gives way to gentler hills. It is little wonder that this valley is the location of Vallaki, Barovia's largest town.

### Dread Secret: The Ba'al Verzi

The Ba'al Verzi (bay-*al vayr*-tzee) was a legendary guild of assassins before Strahd's rise to power. It was said that anyone could be a Ba'al Verzi, and the paranoia the assassins' legend instilled made their work all the easier. The Ba'al Verzi is all but forgotten in present-day Barovia because Strahd has gone to great lengths to exterminate the order and, for the most part, has been successful. The signature weapon of the Ba'al Verzi is a curved dagger, with a hilt wrapped in black, red, and gold.

Strahd's vendetta against the guild stems from his hatred of the Ba'al Verzi named Leo Dilysnia. During Strahd's crusade against the Tergs, Leo served as a minor officer in the von Zarovich army. He smuggled mercenaries into Castle Ravenloft on the day of Sergei and Tatyana's wedding, hoping to secure himself as the ruler of Barovia. But Leo's plan was foiled when his forces were slain by the newly turned vampire Strahd. Leo fled, and only a handful of guests survived that night.

Years later, with the help of a loyal subject named Lorvinia Wachter, Strahd found Leo, overpowered him, turned him into a vampire, and had him sealed inside a mausoleum on the Wachter estate, to starve for eternity. This act pleased Lorvinia Wachter, whose family had been slain by Leo's henchmen.

After centuries of imprisonment, Leo escaped the sealed tomb and has returned to gather his strength and exact his revenge, first against the Wachters, and eventually against Strahd himself.

For more information on Strahd's struggle against Leo Dilysnia, read the Ravenloft novel *I, Strahd: Memoirs of a Vampire*.

Barovia
Mount
Baratak
alt. 10,000 ft.
Lake Zarovich
A
Old Svalich Road
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
Luna River
Mount
Ghakis
alt. 10,000 ft.
E1
E2
E3
E4
E5
N
B
F
F
Ivlis River
One mile

As one travels eastward from Vallaki, the Svalich Road rises steeply through a series of switchbacks, climbing toward the Svalich Pass. As the road passes through one of the ancestral Gates of Barovia, a dizzying sight comes into view: the ominous shape of Castle Ravenloft, perched upon a rocky outcropping 1,000 feet above a wooded valley surrounding the village of Barovia. A bit farther down the road, an ancient stone bridge spans the nascent Ivlis River near the point where it drops hundreds of feet, forming the misty Tser Falls. For all its scenic beauty, the waterfall marks the beginning of the so-called Devil's Descent, the long downhill trek toward the village of Barovia. Beyond the small village, the Svalich Road skirts the edges of the Ivlis Marsh as it passes through the other Gate of Barovia and continues on to foreign lands.

## Traveling through Barovia

Barovia's broken terrain and dense woodlands hinder most people's sense of direction, forcing travelers to rely on the Old Svalich Road. Not only that, but the woods are thick with dangerous denizens, some of which (primarily wolves, undead, and bat swarms) are in the service of Strahd.

Barovia's terrain halves the distance covered by the character's exploration speed, as per the rules in the *Rules Compendium*™ (page 170). Characters using the Old Svalich Road don't fare much better, facing switchbacks, loose gravel, and uneven terrain. These characters cover three-quarters of the distance they would otherwise travel in open fields.

The winds that howl through the Balinoks pose a hindrance to flying creatures as well. These creatures cover only three-quarters of the distance they would be able to fly otherwise. Insubstantial or phasing creatures ignore all these penalties and travel at their regular speeds.

During winter, Barovia experiences unusually cold weather, and the areas of Mount Baratak and Mount Ghakis count as extremely high altitude, requiring Endurance checks to resist adverse effects. For rules on these environmental dangers, see the *Rules Compendium* (page 178).

# A. Vallaki

**When the characters see Vallaki, read:**
*As the Old Svalich Road clears a rocky outcropping, the woods recede to reveal the impressive sight of mounts Baratak and Ghakis framing the serene surface of Lake Zarovich. Nestled amid the dense woods, a small walled town presents itself invitingly, offering a respite from the creeping cold and the gathering dark. A roadside wooden sign proclaims the town's name: VALLAKI.*

Located close to the shores of Lake Zarovich, the town of Vallaki is a thriving if rustic community. With Castle Ravenloft hidden on the other side of the Svalich Pass, the shadow of its lord isn't felt as much here as it is in the village of Barovia. As such, Vallaki often sees an influx of migrants from other parts of the area. Not all of them bear good intentions.

## Vallaki NPCs and Quests

Several of Vallaki's denizens have their own stories, dark secrets, and shadowy allegiances. Some might try to befriend the characters, but not all of them are sincere. A few of the following NPCs are tied to specific locations, while others have no fixed residence.

Two NPCs (Falstan and Arabelle) might accompany the heroes on their adventures. Refer to *Dungeon Master's Guide*® 2 (pages 27–33) for rules on how to run companion characters.

### VALLAKI AT A GLANCE

Vallaki (vah-*lah*-key) is a quaint mountain burg along the Old Svalich Road.

**Population Mix:** 1,500 (70% humans, 12% halflings, 5% dwarves, 5% half-elves, 5% dusk elves, 1% vrylokas, 2% other). The dwarves, half-elves, and vrylokas commingle with the humans. The halflings live in boathouses along Lake Zarovich, and a clan of dusk elves lives in a clearing just outside town (area A10).

**Government:** Vallaki has a burgomaster, Lars Kjurls, but the town is ruled by a council of merchants and landowners. Brom Martikova (innkeeper of the Blue Water Inn) and Yelena Olavnya (owner of Aresek's Wares) have seats on the council.

**Defenses:** Vallaki boasts a town watch composed of 30 guards and 10 archers. In addition, about 50 militia can be called upon by the burgomaster to supplement the town watch in an emergency.

**Inns:** The most popular establishment in town is the Blue Water Inn (area A2), run by Brom Martikova. Other taverns and pubs in town include the Blood-Red Rose, the scenic Lakeside Tavern, and the rough-and-tumble Svalich Pub.

**Supplies:** Aresek's Wares (area A9) is by far the largest general store in Vallaki, and many other suppliers sell their wares from rented space in Aresek's warehouses. Tibor's Smithy (area A7) deals in arms and armor, while the Thaani Quarter (area A8) boasts a number of family stores that cater to more exotic needs. A weekly farmer's market is held at the park (area A4), where fresh fruits, vegetables, and fish can be bought directly from producers.

**Temples:** Barovians as a whole are very private in their devotions, but in recent times they have begun to accept the Church of the Morninglord, due to its promise of deliverance from darkness. Services are held in St. Andral's Church (area A1), overseen by Father Lucian Petrovna.

## Lars Kjurls

**Vallaki Burgomaster**

Lars has served as Vallaki's burgomaster for many years, but he has little actual power. The town is ruled by a council made up of the minor landowners of the vicinity. This leaves Lars with mostly ceremonial duties, which he performs with gusto. Still, the town watch reports to Lars, and he acts as a judge in matters of law. When not on duty, Lars can be found tending to his gardens near the town square or merrily drinking at the Blue Water Inn, where he is fond of buying drinks for newcomers.

### MINOR QUEST: VALLAKI'S BRAVEST

**5th-level Minor Quest (40 XP/character)**

*My colleague, Burgomaster Indirovich of Barovia, has sent me a troubling letter, telling of depredations and missing villagers. If you'd agree to help Barovia in Vallaki's name, the town would be much grateful.*

If the characters are willing to travel to the village of Barovia and investigate the matter, Lars provides them with a letter of authority. If they solve the issue, it will greatly increase Lars's status among the townsfolk of Vallaki, and the heroes will gain a +2 bonus to checks to interact with people of Vallaki or Barovia for a month. See area E for more information on the problems plaguing the village of Barovia.

**Treasure:** Completing this quest provides an additional reward of 50 gp per character.

## Falstan Mitrache

**Halfling Guide**

This wiry, leather-clad halfling can be found either at his boathouse by Lake Zarovich, hanging around the park in Vallaki looking for work as a guide, or drinking at the Blue Water Inn or in one of the inns in the Thaani quarter. Falstan is amiable and competent, and anyone who is asked about a guide will be quick to mention his name. Unknown to everyone else, Falstan regularly reports to Strahd's agents, providing the count with information on Vallaki and its citizens. This report could be a simple whisper within earshot of a wolf or an innocuous chat with a Vistani traveler.

If Falstan is with the characters as they cross the bridge over the Tser Falls, an easy Insight check reveals that he is anguished about something. If asked about it, Falstan reveals that he is haunted by the memory of his beloved Yera, who fell from Falstan's boat and went over the Tser Falls. For more information, see area C.

Falstan agrees to serve the heroes as a guide in return for a standard share of treasure, and he does his best to earn his keep. He is brave but not foolhardy, preferring to assist the adventurers instead of taking on enemies by himself.

### DREAD SECRET: STRAHD'S AGENTS

Falstan Mitrache and Arabelle Zarovan serve as agents and spies for Strahd von Zarovich, yet neither is evil. Their service to the count stems not from some secret lust for power, but from a genuine loyalty to their ruler. Neither of them is aware of Strahd's undead nature—although Arabelle is quite certain Strahd is not entirely human—and they have never been asked by the count to perform evil deeds. In fact, they have never met Strahd face to face, and neither is particularly eager to do so.

| **Falstan Mitrache** | **Level 5 Striker** |
|---|---|
| Small natural humanoid, halfling | |
| **HP** 46; **Bloodied** 23; **Healing Surges** 8 | **Initiative** +5 |
| **AC** 20, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 18 | **Perception** +3 |
| **Speed** 5 | |
| **Saving Throws** +5 against fear effects | |
| **Traits** | |
| **Combat Advantage** | |
| If Falstan hits a creature granting combat advantage to him, he deals 1d6 extra damage. | |
| **Nimble Reaction** | |
| Falstan gains a +2 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| **Dagger** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +12 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 1d4 + 5 damage. | |
| *Effect:* Falstan can shift 1 square. | |
| **Throwing Dagger** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 5/10 (one creature); +12 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 1d4 + 5 damage. | |
| **Mobile Melee Attack** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Effect:* Falstan moves up to 4 squares, using *dagger* at any point during the move. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks from the target of the attack. | |
| **Triggered Actions** | |
| **Second Chance** ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Trigger:* Falstan is hit by an attack. | |
| *Effect (Immediate Interrupt):* The attacker must reroll the attack and use the second roll, even if it is lower. | |
| **Skills** Athletics +7, Nature +8, Stealth +10 | |
| **Str** 10 (+2) **Dex** 16 (+5) **Wis** 12 (+3) | |
| **Con** 14 (+4) **Int** 10 (+2) **Cha** 13 (+3) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Common | |
| **Equipment** leather armor, 5 daggers, adventurer's kit | |

## Arabelle Zarovan

**Vistani Seer**

The Zarovan tribe led by Madame Eva has served Strahd for many years. Still, some Vistani still chafe under the elderly seer's leadership. One of these rebels is the young fortune-teller Arabelle Zarovan. Arabelle came to Vallaki after her tarokka readings told of the coming of a dukkar, one of the evil beings prophesied to bring woe upon the Vistani (see the

## DREAD SECRET: THE DUKKAR

The most feared entity in Vistani lore is the dukkar, a being prophesied to endanger Vistani everywhere. Past dukkars included the mad seer, Hyskosa, and the fiendish Vistani, Mallochio Aderre. According to the Vistani tradition, the Zarovan tribe is responsible for monitoring the rumors of new dukkars, and to dispose of them if possible.

Although this adventure doesn't have any indication of a new dukkar rising, you can include hints to such a creature. A dukkar could be a cambion, an evil fey, or any manner of supernatural creature that is aimed at destroying the Vistani.

For more information on the Vistani, check the "Playing Vistani" articles in *Dragon* 380.

"Dread Secret: The Dukkar" sidebar). Since it is the duty of the Zarovans to watch out for the rise of new dukkars, Arabelle decided—against Madame Eva's wishes—to stay in Vallaki. She earns her keep by playing her fiddle at the Blue Water Inn (where she has a small room) and fortune-telling at the weekly market in the park.

Like Falstan Mitrache, Arabelle often relays information to Strahd's agents. She is a trove of rumors, knowing something about almost everyone in town, and she shares information with characters who give her useful information in exchange—information that will soon find its way to the count's ears.

Arabelle will accompany characters if they already have a lead on a possible supernatural threat, and she requests a standard share of treasure as payment for her contributions. Arabelle prefers to stay out of melee combat, focusing instead on hindering enemies with vicious curses and healing allies with soothing rhymes. Still, she does her best to guide the characters to NPCs in need of assistance. She watches how well the characters do and reports her assessment of their capabilities to Strahd.

**Object Reading:** In addition to her fortune-telling ability (see the "Arabelle's Fortune-Telling" sidebar), Arabelle knows the Object Reading ritual and can perform it for anyone willing to pay the component cost of 25 gp. If she is asked to perform an Object Reading on one of the daggers used to murder Karl and Nikolai Wachter (see Lucian Petrovna and his quest), she sees the murders being committed by a bearded monk whom she knows as Brother Henrik.

**Arabelle Zarovan** **Level 5 Controller**
Medium natural humanoid, human

**HP** 37; **Bloodied** 18; **Healing Surges** 6 **Initiative** +3
**AC** 18, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 19 **Perception** +5
**Speed** 6

**Standard Actions**

**Dagger** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +12 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d4 + 3 damage, and Arabelle can slide the target 1 square.

**Dreadful Curse** (implement, psychic) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 5 (one creature); +9 vs. Will
*Hit:* 1d8 + 5 psychic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Arabelle's next turn.

**Minor Actions**

**Evil Eye of the Vistani** ✦ **Encounter**
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +9 vs. Will
*Hit:* Until the end of Arabelle's next turn, the target grants combat advantage and cannot willingly move closer to Arabelle.

**Majestic Word** (healing) ✦ **2/Encounter**
*Effect:* Close burst 5 (one ally in the burst); the target can spend a healing surge, regaining 3 additional hit points. Arabelle can also slide the target 1 square.

**Skills** Arcana +8, Bluff +10, Insight +10

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 10 (+2) | **Dex** 12 (+3) | **Wis** 16 (+5) |
| **Con** 11 (+2) | **Int** 13 (+3) | **Cha** 16 (+5) |

**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Common
**Equipment** clothing, dagger, tarokka deck, fiddle

## Hallid Keshtai

**Thaani Tattoo Artist**

Hallid is a serene man in his early twenties, with a steady hand and a good eye for art. He was born in the Thaani homeland of Bluetspur, and as such has few memories of the nightmarish domain. Hallid has psionic abilities that he doesn't like to brag about, and he has a crush on Arabelle, the Vistani seer, but is afraid that their different cultures might keep them apart.

If the characters befriend Hallid, he asks them to look into a strange malaise that has been afflicting the residents of the Thaani neighborhood (see the minor quest, below).

By day, Hallid can usually be found in his tattoo parlor in the Thaani neighborhood, or strolling by the park. By night, he spends time at the Blue Water Inn, chatting with Brom Martikova.

### MINOR QUEST: STOP THE PLAGUE

**6th-level Minor Quest (50 XP/character)**

*Some of my neighbors have exhibited uncharacteristic violent behavior, and a few have displayed other symptoms including convulsions and paranoia. I fear it's some sort of madness plague, and we run the risk of being quarantined or exiled. Fights have been erupting with alarming frequency. Can you help find the source of this affliction?*

To complete this quest, the characters must establish a connection between the "madness plague" and the Old Markov House (area A11).

**Insight or Streetwise DC 15:** If the characters question locals and investigate recent outbursts of violence, they notice that most of the incidents occurred in close proximity to the Old Markov House.

**Treasure:** If the heroes end the madness plague, Hallid gives each character a level 4 *fireheart tattoo* (*Adventurer's Vault™ 2*, page 87) as a reward.

## ARABELLE'S FORTUNE-TELLING

An adventure set in Barovia with a Vistani NPC—or possibly even a Vistani character—is bound to have the players asking to have their fortunes told, in a tradition that dates back to the original I6 *Ravenloft* adventure. If the characters ask Arabelle to read the tarokka for them, follow these instructions.

**Preparing the Deck:** Take a regular deck of cards and remove all cards except the aces, kings, queens, jacks, 3s, 7s, and 10s. Allow each player to shuffle the deck.

**The Reading:** Each player should draw a card. The suit of these cards provides a benefit or penalty to the players' characters (but don't tell them that), while the face of the card determines where these adjustments apply. Read only the text in quotation marks—first the face and then the suit of the card.

*Ace:* "The lonely sigil. This speaks of a holy place in the mountains." (This clue refers to the Monastery of the White Sun.)

*3:* "The mark of the moon, full, new, or in between. This place has a history of witchcraft." (This clue points to Lysaga Hill.)

*7:* "The glyph of water." (This refers to Tser Falls or Ivlis Marsh.)

*10:* "The card of many lives. This speaks of a place of civilization." (Arabelle hints at Vallaki.)

*Jack:* "This is the scout, the solitary hunter. His domains are the mist-shrouded woodlands." (This clue points to the Svalich Woods.)

*Queen:* "This is Death, the Queen of the World. This speaks of a place where death rules." (This clue refers to Castle Ravenloft, but Arabelle tries to point heroes toward the Monastery of the White Sun, suggesting that the clue points to a statue of the Queen of Death in the monastery. A DC 22 Insight check reveals that Arabelle is trying to keep the heroes as far away from Strahd as possible.)

*King:* "The master card. This speaks of a place of power." (This clue refers to Castle Ravenloft. Arabelle does not cover up this fact, but adds, "Strahd knows all that transpires in his domain. He watches over you, but he is not your enemy.")

*Diamonds:* "Your soul is shielded from evil in this place." (The character gains a +2 bonus to Will in this location.)

*Hearts:* "Your blood sustains you in this place." (When using his or her second wind in this location, the character regains additional hit points equal to 5 + the character's level.)

*Spades:* "Blades will be drawn when you least expect it." (Whenever the character rolls initiative in this location, he or she takes a -10 penalty.)

*Clubs:* "Your soul is vulnerable here, but ebbing life sustains you." (The character takes a -2 penalty to Will in this location. This penalty ends when the character is first bloodied.)

### Brom Martikova

**Owner, Blue Water Inn**

Brom is the younger brother of Bray Martikova, owner of the Blood o' the Vine tavern (area E1) in the village of Barovia. For most of his life, Brom helped Bray run the Blood o' the Vine, but his brother has since called upon him to help with another matter: the operation of the Keepers of the Feather, a secret society dedicated to the destruction of Strahd von Zarovich. Brom is one of the few Barovians who knows the truth about the count's vampiric nature.

| **Brom Martikova** | **Level 4 Defender** |
|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | |
| **HP** 47; **Bloodied** 23; **Healing Surges** 11 | **Initiative** +3 |
| **AC** 21, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 17 | **Perception** +4 |
| **Speed** 6 | |

**Traits**

☼ **Defender Aura ✦ Aura** 1
Any enemy in the aura takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls when it makes an attack that does not include among its targets either Brom or an ally who has a similar aura active. Marked enemies are not subject to this aura.

**Mimicry**
Brom can mimic sounds and voices. A successful Insight check opposed by Brom's Bluff check allows a listener to determine that the effect is faked. Brom can also use this trait to talk to ravens as if they shared a common language.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Cudgel** (weapon) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d6 + 4 damage.

➶ **Dagger** (weapon) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d4 + 3 damage.

⸸ **Dazing Strike** (weapon) **✦ Recharge** if the attack misses
*Effect:* Brom uses *cudgel*, and if he hits, the target is dazed until the end of Brom's next turn.

**Skills** Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Insight +9, Streetwise +8

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 15 (+4) | **Dex** 12 (+3) | **Wis** 15 (+4) |
| **Con** 14 (+4) | **Int** 11 (+2) | **Cha** 12 (+3) |

**Alignment** good **Languages** Common
**Equipment** leather armor, cudgel, 4 daggers, silver feather amulet

Recently, Brom decided to leave the village of Barovia and settle in Vallaki. With his long experience in the tavern business, Brom quickly found work at the Blue Water Inn, where he fell in love with the former owner's daughter, Amelia. When his father-in-law passed away, Brom inherited the inn and has done his best to keep it successful.

As a Keeper of the Feather, Brom keeps an eye out for supernatural threats, and he might guide the characters toward NPCs in need of assistance. If you think the party needs a little extra muscle to complete

a quest, Brom might volunteer to join them, leaving Amelia in charge of the inn during his absence.

Brom tells the heroes that he purchases his meat from the Velikovna elves that have taken over the old Vistani campsite (area A10), but the supply has dwindled in the past few weeks. Brom asks the characters to check with the elves and ascertain the reason (see "The Missing Elves" quest, under Kasimir Velikovna, below). If the characters solve this problem, Brom is happy to give them free rooms and meals for a week.

## Lucian Petrovna

**Cleric, St. Andral's Church**

Father Lucian is a descendant of the famed Tasha Petrovna, Healer of Kings, whose bones lie interred below Castle Ravenloft. Father Lucian is fond of bringing up his prestigious lineage when trying to convince a parishioner to donate to the church renovation. Lucian is less fond of remembering his deranged cousin Yagno, who disappeared years ago after almost killing Lucian's newborn nephew.

During the day, Father Lucian can be found either in St. Andral's church or visiting members of his flock. After the dusk service, he usually drops by the Blue Water Inn for a while before returning to the church.

Father Lucian knows the following rituals and is willing to cast them for characters who donate at least 10 gp to the church: Create Holy Water, Gentle Repose, Iron Vigil, and Purify Water. The characters still have to pay for a ritual's component cost, but Father Lucian has the necessary foci.

### MAJOR QUEST: KNIVES IN THE DARK

**5th-level Major Quest (200 XP/character)**

*After the murders of Nikolai and Karl Wachter, some of my parishioners are afraid of venturing out at night. I am sure they would be more disposed to come to church if the assassin or assassins could be found and detained. Could you help us in this?*

The cousins Karl and Nikolai Wachter were killed by Leo Dilysnia in the guise of Brother Henrik. The Wachter family is partly to blame for Leo's death and torment at the hands of Strahd. Leo eliminated the surviving members of the family before retreating to the Monastery of the White Sun (area H).

Father Lucian can tell the characters that Karl Wachter was found dead in the park (area A4) a week ago. Nikolai Wachter was found dead in his stables the following morning. Both were killed by identical daggers left at the scenes of the crimes. The town watch has both murder weapons in custody.

The Wachters were buried in the cemetery next to St. Andral's Church (area A1). Father Lucian is loath to exhume the corpses, but if the characters insist on taking such action, he notifies Burgomaster Lars Kjurls, who will authorize the act for purposes of casting rituals (see "Speak with Dead" below).

**Streetwise DC 15:** Characters who question members of the town watch or other informed locals (such as the burgomaster) learn that the daggers that were used to murder Karl and Nikolai have curved blades and grips wrapped in black, red, and gold.

**History DC 22:** The daggers are identical with those wielded by the Ba'al Verzi, a legendary guild of assassins that was all but destroyed long ago.

**Inspecting the Daggers:** With the permission of Burgomaster Lars Kjurls, the characters can inspect the murder weapons. An Object Reading ritual cast on either blade conjures a vision of the assassin—a pale, bearded monk in dark robes wearing a lion-headed pendant with ruby eyes around his neck. After slaying each victim, the monk left the murder weapon in the corpse—perhaps as a message or a warning. Arabelle Zarovan knows the Object Reading ritual if the characters do not.

**Speak with Dead:** The characters can exhume Karl's and Nikolai's corpses and cast Speak with Dead on the remains. Karl was attacked while taking an early morning stroll through the park, but he never saw the assassin. Nikolai was killed the following morning upon entering his stables; before Nikolai took his final breath, the assassin leaned down and whispered, "You are the last." The last thing Nikolai remembers seeing is the morning sun gleaming off the ruby eyes of a lion-headed pendant worn by the killer. He did not see the killer's face or recognize his voice.

If the characters use Speak with Dead rituals to ask Karl and Nikolai about the Wachter family crypt (where Leo Dilysnia was entombed for fifty years before escaping), they learn that the mausoleum is nowhere near Vallaki.

**Tracking Down the Assassin:** The name Leo Dilysnia is all but forgotten, but once the characters have a description of the assassin, they can question locals to learn his identity. For each Vallakian questioned, roll a d6. On a result of 6, the characters learn that the description matches that of a traveling monk named Brother Henrik, who was last seen at Aresek's Wares (area A9). If the characters question Yelena Aresek, they learn where Brother Henrik went. Characters who ask about nearby monasteries learn about the Monastery of the White Sun (area H).

Arabelle claims not to know Brother Henrik's whereabouts (a lie), but she offers to consult her tarokka deck, which provides cryptic clues that point in the direction of Yelena Aresek (area A9).

**Treasure:** If the characters connect "Brother Henrik" to the deaths of Nikolai and Karl Wachter, they receive the full XP award for this quest. In addition, Father Lucian gives them two ritual scrolls at no cost. The available rituals are Create Holy Water, Gentle Repose, Iron Vigil, and Purify Water.

## Kasimir Velikovna

**Dusk Elf Druid**

Kasimir has led the Velikovna elves for more than sixty years, and he hopes that by bringing his people closer to the humans of Barovia, he will ensure his

Vallaki
To Lake Zarovich
N
S
A11
A8
A2
A6
A1
Old Svalich Road
A5
A4
A3
A7
A9
A10
Game Trails
250
0
500
1000
2000
feet
1 mile

people's survival in the coming years. One of Kasimir's deepest shames is the memory of his sister Patrina, who forsook primal magic in favor of the powers of shadow and eventually caught the eye of Strahd von Zarovich.

Kasimir is in the Velikovna camp day and night, since he rarely ventures into the woodlands anymore. He is a trained druid, but his abilities have declined since his adventuring days. Still, characters can purchase potions, totems, and Nature-based alchemical items from Kasimir at the normal price. It takes Kasimir at least one week to make the items the heroes want to purchase.

The Velikovnas have been selling meat from their hunting trips to the Vallakians with great success, but more and more of their hunters haven't returned home yet. If the characters come to ask Kasimir about the drop-off in supply, he tells them of the elves' plight and asks the heroes for help.

### MAJOR QUEST: FIND THE MISSING ELVES

**6th-level Major Quest (200 XP/character)**

*A group of our best hunters has not returned from its latest expedition, and we fear the worst. The others are unwilling to brave the woods to find out what became of them. Can you help us?*

Kasimir provides general directions to the elves' favorite game trails. The characters need only find the elves to gain the quest's XP award; if they are rescue them as well, Kasimir gives them a magic item (see below).

**Nature or Perception DC 22:** The characters discover the point at which the elf hunters wandered off the trail. The heroes can follow their tracks to Lysaga Hill (area D).

**Treasure:** If the characters rescue one or more elf hunters from Lysaga Hill, Kasimir gives them a *baldric of time* (*Mordenkainen's Magnificent Emporium*™, page 78) or another level 6 magic item as a reward.

## Common Townsfolk

Most of the nonplayer characters whom the party will encounter in Vallaki are commoners and town guards. Statistics for these NPCs are presented here, in case they are needed. In addition, here are lists of first and last names you can combine to create NPCs on the fly:

**Male First Names:** Alin, Bogdan, Gavril, Ioan, Mihail, Radu, Sorin.

**Female First Names:** Andreea, Corina, Emilia, Lucia, Nicoleta, Rahela, Viorica.

**Surnames:** Biaram, Ciora, Dragomir, Iorga, Mondragu, Ragar, Trelles, Varisar, Yonescu.

| **Barovian Commoner** | | | **Level 2 Minion Brute** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | | | XP 31 |
| **HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +1 | | | |
| **AC** 14, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 14 | | | **Perception** +2 |
| **Speed** 6 | | | |
| Standard Actions | | | |
| ⊕ **Improvised Weapon** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | | | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +7 vs. AC | | | |
| *Hit:* 6 damage. | | | |
| **Str** 11 (+1) | **Dex** 10 (+1) | **Wis** 12 (+2) | |
| **Con** 12 (+2) | **Int** 10 (+1) | **Cha** 10 (+1) | |
| **Alignment** varies | **Languages** Common | | |

| **Town Guard** | | | **Level 3 Soldier** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | | | XP 150 |
| **HP** 47; **Bloodied** 23 | | | **Initiative** +5 |
| **AC** 19, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14 | | | **Perception** +6 |
| **Speed** 5 | | | |
| Standard Actions | | | |
| ⊕ **Halberd** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | | | |
| *Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +8 vs. AC | | | |
| *Hit:* 1d10 + 5 damage, and the town guard marks the target until the end of the town guard's next turn. | | | |
| ⊕ **Crossbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | | | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 20 (one creature); +8 vs. AC | | | |
| *Hit:* 1d8 + 5 damage. | | | |
| **Powerful Strike** (weapon) ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⚅ | | | |
| *Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +8 vs. AC | | | |
| *Hit:* 2d10 + 5 damage, and the target falls prone. | | | |
| Triggered Actions | | | |
| **Interceding Strike** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | | | |
| *Trigger:* An enemy marked by the town guard makes an attack that doesn't include it as a target. | | | |
| *Attack (Immediate Interrupt):* Melee 2 (the triggering enemy); +8 vs. AC | | | |
| *Hit:* 1d10 + 5 damage. | | | |
| **Skills** Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Insight +9, Streetwise +10 | | | |
| **Str** 13 (+3) | **Dex** 15 (+4) | **Wis** 15 (+4) | |
| **Con** 14 (+4) | **Int** 11 (+2) | **Cha** 16 (+5) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned | **Languages** Common | | |
| **Equipment** chainmail, halberd, crossbow, 20 bolts | | | |

# Locations in Vallaki

This section describes key locations in Vallaki, and you are free to flesh out other locations as befits your campaign.

## A1. St. Andral's Church

*This centuries-old stone building could use some renovation. Its cracked, stained-glass windows depict several pious saints. A wrought-iron fence encloses a garden of tombstones next to the church. A low mist creeps across the graveyard.*

Named for St. Andral, whose bones once rested underneath the main altar, this church is dedicated to a deity the Barovians call the Morninglord, who promised an end to the misty darkness that engulfed the land.

The church is overseen by the elderly Father Lucian Petrovna and a couple of novices. Services are held at dawn and dusk, and are usually poorly attended. Instead, townsfolk frequently visit the cemetery behind the church to pay their respects to deceased loved ones.

**Cemetery:** Characters who visit the nearby cemetery see a pair of fresh graves belonging to the cousins Karl and Nikolai Wachter, two murdered council members (see Lucian Petrovna's quest). There are no surviving members of the Wachter family left in Vallaki, so the tombstones were made at the town's expense by order of the burgomaster, Lars Kjurls.

Pious characters can spend the night in the church, provided they agree to do chores (mostly sweeping, washing dishes or clothing, and so on) for a few hours.

**Religion DC 15:** The Morninglord was originally a religion brought to Barovia by traveling adventurers. In time, that religion was mixed with the traditional Barovian worship of hallowed saints of the past.

**Religion DC 23:** In addition to St. Andral, other Barovian saints include St. Ecaterine, St. Bogdan, and St. Markovia.

## A2. Blue Water Inn

*This large, two-story building bears a sign hanging over the door that depicts a blue waterfall.*

The Blue Water Inn is favored not only by local townsfolk but also by visitors. Until recently, few people dared go out at night, but in recent times this behavior has changed. The Blue Water Inn now sees bustling activity well into the night.

The inn is run by Brom Martikova, his wife Amelia, his sister-in-law Magda, and several servants. The main room is built around a large fireplace where goats, boars, and pheasants roast before meals. Brom is proud to serve a good selection of beers, ciders, and a strong Barovian plum brandy called *tuika*.

Most locals can be found here at one time or another, especially Father Lucian, the burgomaster Lars Kjurls, and Tibor the dwarf smith (area A7).

## A3. Village Hall

*This sturdy stone building is draped in ivy, hinting at its age. A second story made of wood appears to be of newer construction. Above the main entrance hangs a somewhat tattered flag bearing the emblem of an open-winged red raven on triangular fields of white and black separated by a diagonal gold line.*

The village hall (still called thus by locals despite the fact that Vallaki is more properly regarded as a town) serves as the meeting place for the council of merchants and landowners that governs the city. It also doubles as a courthouse and a jail. The back of the hall boasts six cells with reinforced wooden doors capable of holding drunks and troublemakers. Recently, a second floor was added to the village hall to serve as armory and barracks for members of the town watch that are on duty.

The council members have met twice in the past week to discuss the murders of two of their own: Karl Wachter and his cousin, Nikolai. Some of them live in fear that they might be next, while others are convinced that the assassin must have a vendetta against the Wachter family.

Burgomaster Lars Kjurls is usually here during daytime, settling disputes and conferring with council members over issues that affect their businesses and holdings; otherwise, he can be found at the Blue Water Inn.

**History DC 15:** The flag mounted above the doorway bears the ancestral standard of the von Zarovich line. It has served as Barovia's national emblem since the days of Strahd I.

## A4. Park

*Healthy trees shade this alluring park, which during the day is dappled with sunlight and alive with the sound of chirping birds. At night, the park takes on a more sinister aspect as a haunt for hooligans and shadowy creatures.*

By day, the many trees in Vallaki's park offer a quiet place for strolls and picnics. Once per week, farmers and fishers congregate here to sell their wares. By night, the park becomes a dark, brooding place. Ruffians stumble through it after evenings of drinking, and fights are common.

One week ago, the body of council member Karl Wachter was found in the park in the early hours of the morning. See Lucian Petrovna's quest for more information on Karl's murder.

## A5. Town Square

*The town square is dominated by a large fountain that boasts the statue of an explorer of old. Dressed in cloaks and furs, he points to the Svalich Pass. No one can remember his name, but Vallakians have grown used to throwing silver coins into the fountain once a year, for good luck.*

Characters seen taking one or more coins from the fountain take a –2 penalty on checks made to interact with villagers for the next month. Any character who throws at least one coin into the fountain receives a benefit in area H4.

## A6. Public Stables

*These stables offer rented space for those with mounts and coaches in need of shelter. Two gold pieces will ensure that your mount is housed, washed, and fed by the servants. Parking a vehicle here costs another two gold pieces.*

The stables were recently made public after the death of their owner, council member Nikolai Wachter. See Lucian Petrovna's quest for more information on Nikolai's murder.

**Perception DC 15:** The characters find a small trapdoor hidden under a bale of hay. An iron padlock keeps the trapdoor closed, but it can be smashed or picked (Thievery DC 22). Beneath the trapdoor is a trunk that holds Wachter family heirlooms and bunches of parchment containing old letters between Nikolai and his father. One letter, written by Nikolai's father shortly before his death, reads as follows.

*Dear Nikolai,*

*I hear Death calling my name. It won't be long now, and I shall greet the darkness with relief. Please see that my remains are burned to ash and scattered to the winds. You must not, under any circumstances, open the mausoleum, for an ancient evil sleeps there for all eternity and must not to be awakened!*

*Your Father*

The letter, dated three years ago, makes a veiled reference to Leo Dilysnia, who was imprisoned by Strahd in the Wachter family mausoleum. The location of the mausoleum is not divulged in any of the correspondence, nor does any living soul know its whereabouts.

## A7. Tibor's Smithy

*This squat building boasts reinforced doors and windows, and a large, soot-covered chimney. A cast-iron sign is affixed to the wall, proclaiming simply "Smithy."*

The smithy's prior owner, a dwarf named Kierkal Cuerz, spent his winters in Barovia with a local paramour. But after too many breaking and enterings while he was away, he decided to sell the smithy to his dwarf apprentice, Tibor Rannak.

A former adventurer who dabbled in wizardry, Tibor is a master craftsman and can craft common magic arms and armor (up to 8th level). A character who wants to procure Tibor's services as a magic item crafter must provide the raw materials, which can be purchased from Aresek's Wares (see area 9). The cost for materials and labor is equal to the standard cost of the item. It takes Tibor at least a week to craft a magic item, since he has other duties to attend to. He will, however, accept a bonus to work faster.

## A8. Thaani Neighborhood

*This part of Vallaki has the same sturdy buildings found elsewhere in town, but subtle differences in decor mark this as a foreigners' neighborhood. The floral patterns ubiquitous to the wooden windowsills are replaced by delicate abstract designs reminiscent of mazes.*

The mazes are emblematic of this neighborhood's Thaani residents. The Thaani came to Vallaki to escape their mountainous homeland (see the "Dread Secret: The Thaani" sidebar).

Although common services and shops can be found here, the Thaani neighborhood is best known for its exotic wares, such as sculpted crystal, intricate tattoos (either permanent or temporary), and elaborate tapestries.

Arabelle Zarovan, Yelena Aresek, and Hallid Keshtai live and work here, although only Hallid is a Thaani. Hallid can also be found in the Blue Water Inn.

### DREAD SECRET: THE THAANI

The Thaani are humans who escaped Bluetspur, a mountainous realm ruled by a subterranean enclave of mind flayers. These humans had been experimented upon, and many gained psionic abilities as a result.

The Thaani employ meditation techniques to keep their minds from fracturing as a result of mind flayer torture. Not all of them succeed.

Although their culture is different, Thaani use the same statistics as kalashtar (see the *Eberron® Player's Guide* and "Power of the Mind: Kalashtar" in *Dragon* 385).

## A9. Aresek's Wares

*This large stockyard boasts a couple of roomy warehouses. A wooden sign above the front gate reads "Aresek's Wares" in Common.*

Owned by council member Yelena Aresek, widow of the late Gunther Aresek, the stockyard serves as both a general store and as a facility where storage space can be rented for a percentage of profits.

The characters can purchase any mundane item, including adventuring gear, at Aresek's Wares, usually at 10 percent above the listed price. Common magic items of up to 6th level can be ordered—again, at 10 percent above the listed price—but take 1d4 weeks to arrive.

Yelena was the last person in Vallaki to see Brother Henrik. If questioned, she recalls a pale, bearded monk entering her store six days ago. She claims that he promptly left without a word. The truth is actually somewhat more troubling.

**Perception DC 22:** Yelena looks a touch pale and wears fancy scarves to conceal fang marks on her neck. She is alive, however, not undead.

**Insight DC 22:** The characters sense that Yelena has been subjected to a powerful charm effect. Yelena can't remember the truth because Leo hypnotized her and made her forget their last encounter together. Casting a Remove Affliction ritual on Yelena restores her lost memory.

In the guise of Brother Henrik, Leo Dilysnia came to Yelena eight days ago and drew some of her blood. Through his research, Leo learned that Yelena might be one of Strahd's long-lost descendants. (Yelena's maiden name is Olavnya, a name shared with a former burgomaster who had a brief tryst with Strahd before the dark powers turned him into a vampire.) Leo dominated Yelena with his vampire gaze and performed a ritual, during which he drank some of Yelena's blood. The ritual renders him undetectable by Strahd. As long as Yelena is alive, Strahd cannot sense Leo's presence or location.

**Development:** Once she regains her memories, Yelena remembers "Brother Henrik" saying that he needed her blood to "stay hidden from the devil Strahd." She also remembers Brother Henrik saying that he intended to pay a visit to his fellow monks at the White Sun Monastery.

## A10. Velikovna Camp

*The woodlands part abruptly near a rising hill. Buildings partially built into the hillsides show delicately carved woodwork. Large tents house a small smithy, a butchery, and other workshops.*

Located near the edge of the woods surrounding Vallaki, this natural clearing has served as a campsite for the Vistani for many years. Recently, the Vistani took to the road again, and the camp has been taken over by the Velikovnas, a clan of dusk elves (see the "Dread Secret: Dusk Elves" sidebar). These elves have always lived near the woods, striving to stay beneath Strahd's notice, but have made efforts to connect with their Barovian neighbors. The clan is headed by Kasimir Velikovna, an elderly elf with a vast knowledge of herbs.

### DREAD SECRET: DUSK ELVES

Dusk elves are a cultural offshoot of the more common sylvan elves, said to be blessed by the moon with great stealth. They are more somber and reserved than their wild cousins, and they tend to dress in fashions closer to the norm of the realm they live in.

For more information on dusk elves, see "Winning Races: Dusk Elves" in *Dragon* 382.

## A11. Old Markov House

**Combat Encounter Level 7 (1,600 XP)**

*This dreary house boasts two stories and an attic. All the windows are shuttered, and an outside cellar door is held shut by a rusted iron padlock.*

When the first Thaani arrived in Vallaki less than a decade ago, they laid claim to some half-crumbling houses in the north end of the village. The first house inhabited was the old Markov place, which Vallakians believed was cursed. It is owned by an elderly bookseller named Khasad and his assistant Tashlai (see "Dread Secret: The Old Markov House" for their fate).

**Streetwise DC 11:** Khasad and Tashlai haven't been seen in months, and they are believed to be traveling on business. (In fact, they are holed up inside the house, each having undergone a terrible transformation.)

## DREAD SECRET: THE OLD MARKOV HOUSE

The suffering of Frantisek Markov's wife tainted the house with a seed of madness that slowly drove the house's current residents insane. Khasad was overcome by the Far Realm's influence and now serves as host to a tsochar noble; the creature's slimy tentacles spill out of his gaping mouth. Khasad's assistant Tashlai fared no better: she died of fright, and her head floated up and transformed into a gauth.

The presence of the tsochar has sent ripples of madness throughout the north end of town. Now, it has begun to turn the psychically sensitive Thaani against one another.

**Streetwise DC 15:** The house originally belonged to a butcher named Frantisek Markov. Markov performed grisly operations on the animal carcasses, grafting them together in an attempt to shape life. When Markov's wife discovered her husband's gruesome activities, she threatened to divulge his secrets. She became Markov's next experiment, living for three days before succumbing. Markov hid her corpse in the cellar, which doubled as his workshop.

Despite Markov's efforts to conceal his handiwork, the Vallakians learned his secret. The mad butcher fled the town to escape a lynch mob. His wife's remains were later removed from the cellar and laid to rest in Vallaki's cemetery, and the house was abandoned until the Thaani arrived and Khasad moved in.

### Investigating the Madness

If the characters have befriended Hallid Keshtai, he asks them to end the "madness plague." If the heroes are unfamiliar with Hallid, they could be approached by Burgomaster Lars Kjurls, Arabelle Zarovan, or Yelena Olavnya to investigate strange sounds coming from the old Markov House.

You can run the characters' investigation as a roleplaying challenge. They might witness violent outbursts among the Thaani. Children get involved in serious fistfights, people argue openly, and the characters might have to intervene to prevent bloodshed. Use the Barovian commoner statistics if you want to stage a combat encounter between the characters and a handful of enraged Thaani townsfolk. If there are witnesses, they plead with the heroes to avoid killing their fellow Vallakians.

At the end of the investigation, the characters notice how the violent episodes and random seizures of the townsfolk tend to be worse as they move closer to the Old Markov House. The townsfolk erroneously believe that the house's current owner is out of town, traveling on business; see the "Dread Secret: The Old Markov House" sidebar for the truth.

Use the encounter below when the characters are ready to confront the source of the plague.

**When the characters enter the house, read:**
*The interior of this house is dark and reeks of mildew. Furniture is out of place, cupboards are ajar, and broken items lie everywhere. Strange glyphs are scribbled on the walls in what appears to be blood.*

Once the noble tsochar and the gauth are killed, the madness plague ends, and the Thaani start behaving normally. If informed of the incident, the burgomaster orders that the Old Markov House be torn down.

### Features of the House

**Ceilings:** Ceilings are 10 feet high.

**Doors:** Doors are made of wood and unlocked. A locked door can be forced open with a DC 15 Strength check or picked with a DC 15 Thievery check.

**Exterior Walls:** The wooden walls offer plenty of handholds and require a DC 15 Athletics check to climb.

**Illumination:** None except the glowing circle on the ground floor (which sheds dim light).

**Windows:** The window's shutters are closed and locked from within. The shutters can be unlocked with a DC 15 Thievery check or broken with a DC 15 Strength check.

### Ground Floor

The ground floor has a large room that served as a storefront for the owners, who traded in books. A kitchen and a storage room open onto the storefront, and a staircase leads to the second floor.

The circle in the ground floor serves as a connection to the Far Realm. The noble tsochar can use *pierce the barrier* to bring allies through the circle, even if it doesn't have line of sight to it.

**When the characters see the circle, read:**
*A glowing circle, faintly visible in the dim light, seems to pulse to the beat of an unholy heart.*

**Arcana DC 15:** A character who studies the glowing circle on the ground floor realizes it is some sort of planar rupture being maintained by psionic energy. Killing the tsochar noble will close the rupture. Destroying the circle does not collapse the planar rupture, which occupies a point in space directly above it.

### Second Floor

The second floor contains Khasad's small bedroom and bookstore. The staircase spirals up to the attic and down to the ground floor.

**Monsters:** Tashlai (beholder gauth), 4 tsochar parasites (see the "Tactics" section).

**When the characters see Tashlai the gauth, read:**
*The creature before you is a nightmare given form. It looks like a bloated human head, but only one of its eyes remains, enlarged and unblinking. From its balding scalp, fleshy tendrils hold four extra eyes. Its mouth gapes open, filled with crooked teeth.*

**Perception DC 15:** *You hear the creaking footsteps of something in the attic.*

**Tactics:** The gauth tries to hold melee attackers at bay by pushing them away with its *telekinesis ray* and immobilizing them with its *central eye*. At the same time, it targets ranged attackers with its other *eye rays*.

The noble tsochar in the attic can hear sounds of combat here. It uses *pierce the barrier* to summon four tsochar parasites, which appear in the glowing circle on the ground floor. These parasites climb the stairs and assist the beholder gauth.

## Attic

The attic is littered with books, papers, and other assorted junk. Although never tidy, it is now positively chaotic. Medium creatures treat the floor as difficult terrain.

**Monsters:** Khasad (noble tsochar), 6+ tsochar parasites. Khasad wanders the attic while six parasites hide in the rafters above him. Four more parasites are summoned when the tsochar noble uses *pierce the barrier*.

**When the characters see Khasad, read:**
*This human puppet has slimy tentacles protruding from its mouth, and the skin seems to writhe as if the body was filled with worms.*

**Perception DC 24:** *Creatures made entirely of slimy tendrils skitter along the rafters toward you!*

**Tactics:** The tsochar parasites begin combat hiding in the shadows of the ceiling rafters, hoping to attack a character with surprise.

**4 Tsochar Parasites** **Level 9 Minion Controller**
Small aberrant magical beast XP 100 each

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +9
**AC** 23, **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 20 **Perception** +7
**Speed** 4, climb 4 Darkvision

**Traits**

**Hideous Grasp**
While the tsochar has a creature grabbed, the tsochar gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses.

**Standard Actions**

**Tentacles** (poison) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. AC
*Hit:* 8 poison damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 17).

**Burrow into Host** (poison) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one humanoid creature grabbed by the tsochar); +12 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* The target is dominated (save ends). While the target is dominated, the tsochar is removed from play, though it can still issue commands to the target. If the target is dominated at the end of the encounter, the tsochar takes full control of the target until the target drops below 1 hit point. A Remove Affliction ritual or similar magic can force the tsochar out of its host.
*Aftereffect:* The tsochar appears in an unoccupied square adjacent to the target.

**Skills** Stealth +14
**Str** 13 (+5) **Dex** 20 (+9) **Wis** 16 (+7)
**Con** 18 (+8) **Int** 15 (+6) **Cha** 13 (+5)
**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, telepathy 10

The noble tsochar uses *pierce the barrier* to create a zone centered on the glowing circle on the ground floor (the tsochar noble does not need line of sight to do so). As the zone ends, four more tsochar parasites appear within the magic circle and begin to crawl upstairs to join the fight. It otherwise uses *insanity vortex* as often as it can, and it pursues enemies beyond the attic's confines.

**Treasure:** Strewn among the books in the attic are six chiseled gems worth 50 gp each and a level 8 magic item (DC 16 Perception check to find them).

**Beholder Gauth** **Level 5 Elite Artillery**
Medium aberrant magical beast XP 400

**HP** 102; **Bloodied** 51 **Initiative** +4
**AC** 17, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 19 **Perception** +10
**Speed** 0, fly 6 (hover) All-around vision, darkvision
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

**All-Around Vision**
Enemies can't gain combat advantage by flanking the gauth.

**Standard Actions**

**Bite** ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d4 + 5 damage.

**Eye Rays** ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* The gauth uses two eye ray powers chosen from the list below. Each eye ray must target a different creature. Using *eye rays* does not provoke opportunity attacks.
1. Fire Ray (fire): Ranged 8; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 6 fire damage.
2. Exhaustion Ray (necrotic): Ranged 8; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).
3. Sleep Ray (charm): Ranged 8; +10 vs. Fortitude; the target is slowed (save ends).
*First Failed Saving Throw:* The target is knocked unconscious instead of slowed (save ends).
4. Telekinesis Ray: Ranged 8; +10 vs. Fortitude; the gauth slides the target up to 4 squares.

**Minor Actions**

**Central Eye** ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 5 (one creature); +10 vs. Will
*Hit:* The target is immobilized until the end of the gauth's next turn.

**Str** 12 (+3) **Dex** 15 (+4) **Wis** 16 (+5)
**Con** 15 (+4) **Int** 18 (+6) **Cha** 20 (+7)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Deep Speech

## Cellar

The rusted lock on the outside cellar door can be picked with a DC 15 Thievery check or broken off with a DC 15 Strength check. The cellar has a dirt floor and contains nothing but cobwebs and pieces of old furniture.

**Noble Tsochar** **Level 9 Elite Controller**
Medium aberrant humanoid XP 800

**HP** 184; **Bloodied** 92 **Initiative** +6
**AC** 23, **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 24 **Perception** +13
**Speed** 5 Darkvision
**Immune** dazed
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

☼ **Psychic Scream** (psychic) ✦ Aura 1
Enemies in the aura take 5 psychic damage whenever the tsochar takes psychic damage.

**Parasitic Mind**
At the start of its turn, the tsochar makes saving throws to end any stunning or dominating effect on it.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Tentacle** (poison) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +14 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d10 + 6 poison damage.

**Violet Lightning** (implement, lightning, psychic) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +12 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 2d8 + 8 lightning and psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of its next turn.

**Double Attack** ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* The tsochar uses *violet lightning* twice.

**Insanity Vortex** (charm, implement, psychic) ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞
*Attack:* Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +12 vs. Will
*Hit:* 3d6 + 10 psychic damage, and the target makes a melee basic attack as a free action against a creature the tsochar chooses.

**Minor Actions**

**Pierce the Barrier** (psychic, zone) ✦ **Encounter**
Effect: Area burst 2 within 10. The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the tsochar's next turn. Any enemy that ends its turn in the zone takes 5 psychic damage. As the zone ends, four tsochar parasites appear in unoccupied squares in the zone.

**Triggered Actions**

**Infestation Unveiled** ✦ **Encounter**
*Trigger:* The tsochar drops below 1 hit point from an attack that does not deal psychic damage.
*Effect (No Action):* A tsochar parasite appears in the tsochar's space or the nearest unoccupied square.

**Skills** Arcana +12, Dungeoneering +13, Religion +12
**Str** 8 (+3) **Dex** 14 (+6) **Wis** 18 (+8)
**Con** 12 (+5) **Int** 17 (+7) **Cha** 22 (+10)
**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Deep Speech, telepathy 10
**Equipment** orb, robes

**6+ Tsochar Parasites** **Level 9 Minion Controller**
Small aberrant magical beast XP 100

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +9
**AC** 23, **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 20 **Perception** +7
**Speed** 4, climb 4 Darkvision

**Traits**

**Hideous Grasp**
While the tsochar has a creature grabbed, the tsochar gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses.

**Standard Actions**

⊕ **Tentacles** (poison) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. AC
*Hit:* 8 poison damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 17).

**Burrow into Host** (poison) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one humanoid creature grabbed by the tsochar); +12 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* The target is dominated (save ends). While the target is dominated, the tsochar is removed from play, though it can still issue commands to the target. If the target is dominated at the end of the encounter, the tsochar takes full control of the target until the target drops below 1 hit point. A Remove Affliction ritual or similar magic can force the tsochar out of its host.
*Aftereffect:* The tsochar appears in an unoccupied square adjacent to the target.

**Skills** Stealth +14
**Str** 13 (+5) **Dex** 20 (+9) **Wis** 16 (+7)
**Con** 18 (+8) **Int** 15 (+6) **Cha** 13 (+5)
**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Deep Speech, telepathy 10

Iron chains and meat hooks dangle from the ceiling in the smaller chamber, which Frantisek Markov (the house's original owner) used as a larder. The dirt floor in the larder looks disturbed, as though something was buried here; however, digging reveals nothing. (Frantisek buried his wife here, but her corpse was discovered and removed years ago.)

## B. Gates of Barovia

**When the characters see the gates, read:**
*Thick fog engulfs the Svalich Road. Through the mist you see a pair of high stone buttresses anchoring heavy iron gates. Standing before the buttresses are tall, headless statues of armed guardians with wicked polearms. Weeds and ivy climb up the statues, the heads of which are on the ground nearby.*

These gates mark the edges of the choking fog that surrounds the village of Barovia and Castle Ravenloft. Strahd has the ability to open and close these gates through his connection to the land. If the characters approach within 50 feet from the outside, the gates screech open slowly. After the characters pass through (or retreat to a distance greater than 50 feet), the gates close again with a loud clang. Approaching from the village of Barovia does not cause the gates to open, and in fact they are difficult to force open from that side (DC 28 Strength check). Characters can circle around the gates but must contend with the mists.

Markov House
N
W
E
S
Second Floor
Attic
Ground Floor
Cellar
One square = 5 feet

### The Mists

The valley between the gates is surrounded by a thick curtain of mist. Contained within the mist are Castle Ravenloft and the village of Barovia. Any who try to pass through the mists without Strahd's permission are turned back toward the village, as though some dark, evil will has forbidden their release.

**If the characters pass through the mists, heading away from the village of Barovia, read:**
*Thin, wispy claws form out of thick fog all around you. As they close around your neck, you find it difficult to breathe.*

Unless the characters turn back, they will suffocate and die. Characters who don't need air to breathe are unaffected, but the fog becomes so thick around them that they become disoriented; eventually, they step out of the mist near the point where they entered.

Due to an ancient pact forged with Strahd, the Vistani can come and go as they please; however, they are reluctant to provoke the count's anger by taking others with them when they leave, for fear of breaking their pact. That said, the Vistani have been known to concoct potions that can protect non-Vistani against the choking fog, but they guard this secret well. One of their spies, Bildrath (area E5), has such a potion.

## C. Tser Falls

**As the characters approach the bridge spanning the Ivlis River, read:**
*A wide stone bridge arches across the Ivlis River above a dizzying waterfall. The roar of the falls is almost deafening, and a white veil of mist rises from the bottom and makes the bridge slippery. Though the bridge boasts a 3-foot-high wall of stone on each side, the occasional flower or mourning candle testifies that this protection isn't foolproof.*

Shortly beyond the waterfall, the Ivlis widens to form the Tser Pool, which serves as the campsite for the Vistani band led by the enigmatic Madame Eva. Few Vistani remain here, due to the undead haunting the waterfalls. Madame Eva is vexed by Strahd's unwillingness to get rid of the ghouls, but dares not disobey him openly. Instead, she sent word to the halfling guide Falstan Mitrache, whose beloved is among the undead, instructing him to bring would-be heroes to the Tser Pool in order to lay his deceased bride to rest. This way, Madame Eva rids her people of the undead menace without directly defying Strahd.

### Yera's Unrest

**Combat Encounter Level 6 (1,450 XP)**

The characters visit the Tser Pool and come face to face with the tragic undead creatures that stalk the waters. There is no preset map for this encounter, which occurs along the shore of Tser Pool near the Vistani camp.

**Perception DC 22:** The character notices that something is moving underwater, coming closer to the shore.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Monsters:** Yera (halfling ghast), 6 ghouls.

**When the characters first see the monsters, read:**
*Humanoid figures emerge from the pool, water dripping from pallid flesh and yellowed teeth in their gaping mouths. A child-sized figure leads them, her dark hair covering most of her face.*

The Tser Pool is haunted by the remnants of a drowned halfling woman. This is Yera, the beloved of Falstan Mitrache, who fell out of a boat and failed time and again to catch herself before going over the Tser Falls. She lingers on as a ghast. She has been attacking smugglers that have been conducting shady dealings near the Tser Pool, and several of her victims became ghouls.

**Treasure:** The possessions of smugglers killed by Yera can be found in the shallow waters near the shore. A DC 15 Perception check reveals scattered coins totaling 250 sp and 50 gp. There is also a distinctive red leather eyepatch with a black opal (worth 500 gp) set into it. Finding the eyepatch completes Daria Fidatov's quest.

**Tactics:** The undead are straightforward in their advance, attacking the nearest targets first. If Falstan is with the heroes, Yera behaves differently. She attacks the characters closest to Falstan, as if protecting him. Falstan and Yera refrain from attacking each other, and if a ghoul attacks Falstan, Yera targets that ghoul on her next turn. Yera and the ghouls fight to the death. If reduced to 0 hit points, Yera whispers Falstan's name before dying.

| Halfling Ghast | Level 5 Skirmisher |
|---|---|
| Small natural humanoid (undead) | XP 200 |
| **HP** 64; **Bloodied** 32 | **Initiative** +8 |
| **AC** 19, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 17 | **Perception** +4 |
| **Speed** 6 | Darkvision |
| **Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 5 radiant | |

**Traits**

**☼ Stench of Death ✦ Aura 1**
Any living creature that starts its turn within the aura is slowed until the end of the ghast's next turn.

**Standard Actions**

**⨭ Claws ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d6 + 6 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the ghast's next turn.
*Effect:* The ghast can shift 1 square before and after the attack.

**⸸ Ghastly Bite ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one immobilized, restrained, stunned, or unconscious creature); +10 vs. AC
*Hit:* 4d6 + 6 damage, and the target is stunned and cannot regain hit points (save ends both).

**Triggered Actions**

**✧ Death Burst** (necrotic) **✦ Encounter**
*Trigger:* The ghast drops to 0 hit points.
*Attack (No Action):* Close burst 2 (living creatures in the burst); +8 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* 1d12 + 8 necrotic damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends).

**Skills** Athletics +8, Stealth +11

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 13 (+3) | **Dex** 19 (+6) | **Wis** 14 (+4) |
| **Con** 16 (+5) | **Int** 9 (+1) | **Cha** 13 (+3) |

**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Common

| 6 Ghouls | Level 5 Soldier |
|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid (undead) | XP 200 each |
| **HP** 63; **Bloodied** 31 | **Initiative** +8 |
| **AC** 21, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 16 | **Perception** +2 |
| **Speed** 8, climb 4 | Darkvision |
| **Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic | |

**Traits**

**Weakened Paralysis**
Whenever the ghoul takes radiant damage, one creature immobilized or stunned by the ghoul can make a saving throw against one of those effects.

**Standard Actions**

**⨭ Claws ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d6 + 6 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

**⸸ Ghoulish Bite ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one immobilized, restrained, stunned, or unconscious creature); +10 vs. AC
*Hit:* 4d6 + 6 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).

**Skills** Stealth +11

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 14 (+4) | **Dex** 19 (+6) | **Wis** 11 (+2) |
| **Con** 15 (+4) | **Int** 10 (+2) | **Cha** 12 (+3) |

**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Common

# D. Lysaga Hill

**As the characters approach the hilltop, read:**
*Beyond a curve in the Svalich Road is a steep hill at the foot of Mount Ghakis. The hill is bereft of trees and is more than eight hundred feet higher than the Svalich Pass, its summit hidden by many jutting rocks.*

Lysaga Hill has a sinister reputation. In the ages before Strahd's rise to power, covens of evil cultists gathered there regularly to perform vile sacrifices. St. Ecaterina, a hallowed wandering priest from Barovia's past, sought to eradicate this evil and built a monastery atop Lysaga Hill to sanctify the place. Yet her hopes were undone, as she died when the monastery collapsed under mysterious circumstances.

During the early days of Strahd's mortal rule (before he became a vampire), the ruins atop Lysaga Hill became the hideout of a ruthless bandit known as Red Lukas. The red-haired outlaw preyed upon many villages in the surrounding area, attacking even Vallaki at one point. Through the efforts of Strahd and Sergei von Zarovich, Red Lukas was captured and decapitated, and his head was paraded around Barovia as a warning to would-be bandits—a grisly display that displeased the pious Sergei.

Now the ruins of Lysaga Hill are once again a profane site, where the banshee witch Patrina Velikovna seeks to bond with the land, prove herself Strahd's ideal countess, and exact revenge over her dusk elf kin.

## The Witch of Lysaga Hill

**Combat Encounter Level 8 (1,750 XP)**

The characters' quest to find the missing elf hunters from Vallaki leads them to a confrontation with the banshee-witch Patrina Velikovna and the undead guardians that she created from her elf kin.

**Light:** Dim light (runic circle).

**Monsters:** Patrina Velikovna, 3 dread archers, 3 dread marauders. Patrina and the marauders can be situated anywhere on the ground within the ruins. The archers stand at various points atop the curved outer walls.

**Other Creatures:** 3 elf prisoners (standing on the runic circle).

**Read:**
*You can make out the ruined remains of a large circular tower against the overcast sky. The low-hanging clouds, almost brushing against the 20-foot-tall outer walls, are tinted yellow by a golden glow emanating from within the ruins. Humanoid figures pace among the crumbling walls, as if on patrol. A woman's voice, eerily beautiful, can be heard echoing through the stone-filled landscape.*

The characters might gain a surprise round if they approach the ruins stealthily. Doing this requires successful Stealth checks opposed by the dread archers' Perception check result.

The tower lacks a roof, leaving the entire structure exposed to the elements.

**Debris:** Squares of dense rubble are strewn about the ruins and count as difficult terrain.

**Runic Circle:** This ancient circle counts as defiled ground. Undead creatures on or adjacent to the circle gain regeneration 5 and a +1 bonus to recharge rolls.

Confined to the runic circle are three elf prisoners rounded up by the dread marauders. They can physically leave the circle without harm but dare not do so, as long as Patrina and her undead servitors are watching them.

A character standing on or adjacent to the runic circle can neutralize it with a successful DC 23 Religion check (a standard action). A second successful check consecrates the circle, at which point it deals 10 radiant damage to any undead creature that enters the circle or ends its turn in its space.

**Walls:** The walls are 10 feet high. The archers standing atop the walls gain partial cover against attacks made from the ground. The walls contain numerous holes and handholds, and they can be climbed with a DC 10 Athletics check.

An unlocked trapdoor atop one wall leads to an undercroft containing treasure (see below).

**Treasure:** The possessions of the dread warriors and elf prisoners are stuffed into a collapsed chamber underneath a trapdoor on one of the walls. Among mundane bows, arrows, and survival gear, the characters discover 30 gp and a +2 *longsword of submission* (*Mordenkainen's Magnificent Emporium*, page 34) or another level 9 common or uncommon magic item of your choosing.

**Lore:** Patrina was a living elf a couple of centuries ago, but she scoffed at her brother Kasimir's training in primal magic and opted for the path of the witch. Patrina sacrificed animals to the powers of shadow and ended up attracting the attention of Strahd von Zarovich. The count sought to make her his vampiric bride, and Patrina gladly submitted to his advances. When Patrina tried to feed upon an elf child to seal her transformation into a vampire, Kasimir and the other elves stoned her to death. They surrendered her body to Strahd, who interred her in Castle Ravenloft's crypts, and Patrina soon arose as a banshee. Strahd temporarily released her from her crypt so she could exact her revenge upon her kin, using Lysaga Hill's evil to turn the elves into her undead servitors.

**Tactics:** The dread marauders and archers regard Patrina as their master. As soon as combat breaks out, the marauders focus on characters who are closest to Patrina (and gain combat advantage against enemies adjacent to her). They have no motivation beyond keeping her safe, and they won't pursue fleeing characters or prisoners unless Patrina orders them to. The archers remain atop the walls and attack at range with their bows. The archers' *channel of undeath* trait does not come into play in this encounter, since Patrina does not wield an implement.

The elf prisoners yell for help as soon as combat breaks out. If a clear path presents itself, they flee toward the Velikovna camp outside Vallaki (area A10), staying to the road. If you need statistics for the elf prisoners, use the Barovian commoner statistics.

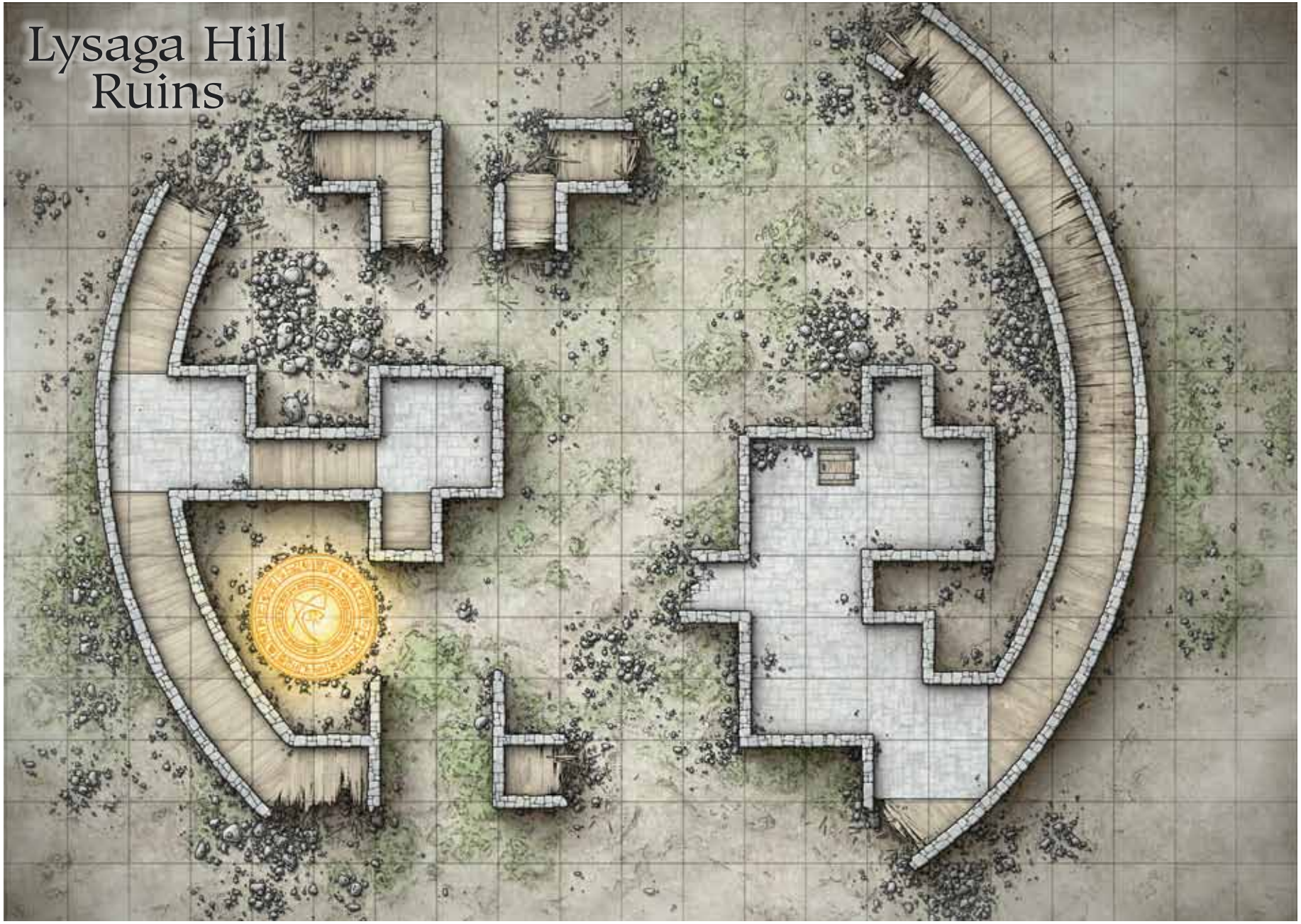
Patrina looks haggard and half-mad, and as soon as she notices the characters' presence, she shrieks about how she won't be denied her vengeance, cursing the characters and ordering the dread warriors to kill them. Patrina uses *grave cry* and *spirit touch* against characters who come close to her, and each time she hits, the dread archers use their *sustained attack* triggered action to further harry the target.

If surrounded by melee attackers, Patrina uses *dirge wail*, sliding the dread marauders closer to her. If she's having trouble recharging the power or if she's bloodied, Patrina moves closer to the runic circle to gain the benefit of its defiling nature. Before she is destroyed, Patrina uses *dread keening* to kill the prisoners and anyone else caught in the blast (out of sheer spite). Patrina refuses to flee, fighting to the end.

**Development:** If Patrina survives the encounter, any Small or Medium humanoids of level 8 or less killed by her *dread keening* rise as dread archers or dread marauders 24 hours later unless they're restored to life or their remains are buried in consecrated earth before then. If Patrina is destroyed, the remains of her victims do not animate. Her ghostly shape re-forms in her crypt within Castle Ravenloft, and Strahd won't allow her to leave again.

## DREAD SECRET: DREADS

Although they resemble zombies, dreads (introduced in *Monster Manual*™ 3) retain enough intelligence and martial skill to serve as formidable guardians. Each dread warrior is created with an unbreakable connection to its master. The dreads that haunt Lysaga Hill were once elf hunters and obey Patrina Velikovna without fail.


Lysaga Hill
Ruins

**Patrina Velikovna** **Level 9 Controller (Leader)**
Medium shadow humanoid (undead) XP 400

**HP** 92; **Bloodied** 46 **Initiative** +7
**AC** 22, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 22 **Perception** +6
**Speed** 0, fly 6 (hover); phasing Darkvison
**Immune** disease, poison

**Traits**

**Insubstantial**
Patrina takes half damage from any damage source, except those that deal force or radiant damage.

**Standard Actions**

**Ghostly Touch** (fear, necrotic) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +12 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 2d8 + 7 necrotic damage, and Patrina slides the target up to 2 squares.

**Grave Cry** (fear, necrotic) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 5 (one creature); +12 vs. Will
Hit: 2d8 + 7 necrotic damage, and the target grants combat advantage until the end of Patrina's next turn.

**Dirge Wail** ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⚅
*Effect:* Close burst 5 (two allies in the burst); as a free action, the target shifts up to 5 squares and can make a basic attack.

**Dread Keening** (fear, psychic) ✦ **Encounter**
*Attack:* Close blast 3 (enemies in the blast); +12 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* 3d6 + 7 psychic damage, and the target moves its speed away from Patrina as a free action. Each square the target enters must be farther from Patrina.

**Skills** Arcana +13, History +13, Religion +13
**Str** 9 (+3) **Dex** 16 (+7) **Wis** 15 (+6)
**Con** 12 (+5) **Int** 19 (+8) **Cha** 20 (+9)
**Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Elven

**3 Dread Archers** **Level 6 Artillery**
Medium natural animate (undead) XP 250 each

**HP** 57; **Bloodied** 28 **Initiative** +6
**AC** 18, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 17 **Perception** +5
**Speed** 6 Low-light vision

**Traits**

**Eyes of Undeath**
The dread archer's master can see or hear anything the archer can see or hear. The master can also speak through the archer.

**Channel of Undeath**
While the dread archer's master has line of sight to the archer, the master can make implement attacks as it if occupied the archer's square.

**Standard Actions**

**Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d6 + 7 damage.

**Longbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
Attack: Ranged 20/40 (one creature); +13 vs. AC
Hit: 1d10 + 3 damage.

**Arching Volley** (weapon) ✦ **Encounter**
*Attack:* Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +13 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d10 + 3 damage.

**Triggered Actions**

**Sustained Attack** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Trigger:* An enemy is hit by the archer's master.
*Attack (Immediate Reaction):* Ranged 10 (the triggering enemy); +13 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d10 + 3 damage.

**Str** 16 (+6) **Dex** 16 (+6) **Wis** 14 (+5)
**Con** 15 (+5) **Int** 4 (+0) **Cha** 9 (+2)
**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** understands Common
**Equipment** short sword, longbow, 40 arrows

**3 Dread Marauders** **Level 5 Skirmisher**
Medium natural animate (undead) XP 200 each

**HP** 63; **Bloodied** 31 **Initiative** +7
**AC** 19, **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16 **Perception** +9
**Speed** 6 Low-light vision

**Traits**

**Combat Advantage**
The dread marauder deals 1d6 extra damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it.

**In the Master's Defense**
The dread marauder has combat advantage against each target adjacent to its master.

**Eyes of Undeath**
The dread marauder's master can see or hear anything the marauder can see or hear. The master can also speak through the marauder.

**Standard Actions**

**Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d6 + 6 damage.

**Longbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 20/40 (one creature); +10 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d10 + 4 damage.

**Skirmish Strike** ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* The marauder shifts 3 squares and uses *short sword* or *longbow*.

**Str** 16 (+5) **Dex** 16 (+5) **Wis** 14 (+4)
**Con** 15 (+4) **Int** 4 (-1) **Cha** 9 (+1)
**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** understands Common
**Equipment** leather armor, short sword, longbow, 20 arrows

# E. Village of Barovia

**When the characters see the village, read:**
*As the road twists and turns down from the Svalich Pass, you spy a tiny village huddled amid the dark woodlands. Smoke rises from few chimneys, but a large building in the center seems almost lively, as if defying the community's gloomy demeanor.*

Nestled in the Barovian valley, the village of Barovia is surrounded on all sides by the Svalich Woods. Barovia's origins are lost to time, but most believe that some sort of community existed here well before the building of Castle Ravenloft to serve as a waypoint for those crossing the Svalich Pass. The community grew with the influx of workers when the castle was built, reaching a population of five hundred people. During the long reign of the von Zaroviches, Barovia has been held hostage by the Vistani, who sell the antidote for the choking fog that surrounds the valley.

Still, Barovia tries desperately to claim a sense of normalcy , but it is unlikely that peace will ever settle under the shadow of Castle Ravenloft.

### DREAD SECRET: IREENA KOLYANA

Players familiar with the original I6 *Ravenloft* adventure are aware that Kolyan Indirovich adopted a girl named Ireena who was eventually revealed to be the reincarnation of Strahd's beloved Tatyana. At this point in time, Kolyan hasn't found the amnesiac girl and lives alone in his house with Ismark, his only son.

## Barovia NPCs and Quests

Much like those of Vallaki, the residents of Barovia have stories to share and secrets to keep. They are a reserved lot, having grown accustomed to keeping to themselves for fear of attracting Strahd's attention.

### Kolyan Indirovich

**Burgomaster**
Kolyan is a good-natured man who tries his best to manage Barovia's troubles without incurring the count's wrath. He sent word to the burgomaster of Vallaki, asking for help in dealing with the mysterious depredations occurring in southern Barovia.

**MINOR QUEST: A SMALL PROBLEM**
**9th-level Minor Quest (80 XP/character)**
*Barovia has always faced its share of trouble—and then some. Lately, we've come under attack by brigands! Many outlying homes have been attacked, and a few villagers have disappeared. Please help put an end to this!*

If the characters investigate the sites of the attacks, a DC 15 Perception check reveals small boot prints that lead toward the Ivlis Marsh (see area G).

If the heroes put an end to the attacks, Bray gives them free lodging and food for a month. Ismark also offers them one of the abandoned houses if they decide to settle in Barovia.

### Bray Martikova

**Sergeant of the Militia and Proprietor of the Blood o' the Vine**
Bray Martikova is a retired adventurer and the elder brother of Brom Martikova. Bray spent much of his youth traveling far and wide before returning home to watch over his dying father, Dohric.

As sergeant of the village militia, Bray is aware of numerous attacks south of the village. Usually, such depredations can be traced back to Strahd's wolves or shambling undead, but he believes goblyns are responsible for these recent attacks, based on the small footprints discovered in and around the ransacked homes. (The "goblyns" he refers to are

### BAROVIA AT A GLANCE

Barovia is a small village surrounded by dark woods under the shadow of Castle Ravenloft.

**Population:** 300 (90% humans, 4% halflings, 3% dwarves, 3% other). Many of the outlying houses are boarded up and deserted.

**Government:** Kolyan Indirovich is Barovia's burgomaster, with his son Ismark serving as deputy burgomaster. Kolyan has a small group of advisors that include Bray Martikova (area E1) and Bildrath Cantemir (area E5).

**Defenses:** Barovia has no garrison, relying on all able-bodied citizens to form a militia when needed. Bray Martikova serves as the sergeant of the militia, with Parpol "Parriwimple" Cantemir serving as his assistant.

**Inns:** Barovia boasts two taverns. The largest and best appointed is the Blood o' the Vine, run by Bray Martikova. A seedier establishment is the Wolf's Den, overseen by Daria Fidatov.

**Supplies:** Bildrath's Mercantile sells most common goods (with prices 10 to 25 percent above normal), but there is a 15 percent chance of a specific item being unavailable. Once a week, Bildrath travels to Vallaki to restock and can bring specific orders with him. To slip through the mists, he first visits the Vistani to procure potions that protect him from the choking fog.

**Temples:** The only church in town, long bereft of any name, lies abandoned. Barovians practice their faith in their own homes. Only the cemetery is still in use.

actually spriggans, but Bray has never heard that name before.) Some of the villagers believe halflings are responsible, and some local halflings have been accosted. Bray is too busy trying to keep tempers from flaring to figure out where the "goblyns" are hiding. He directs them to Ismark, the town burgomaster, who might have a quest for them (see above).

Unknown to all other Barovians, Bray has a secret. Upon his return to Barovia, Bray's father inducted him in the Keepers of the Feather, a secret society bent on destroying Strahd von Zarovich and locating the missing Holy Symbol of Ravenkind. Bray has since established a secret headquarters for the order underneath the Blood o' the Vine. If the characters have gained his trust, Bray might ask to join them as a companion on their next quest. At your discretion, Bray might send Parpol Cantemir (see below) in his stead, or, if the characters are few in number, bring Parpol along for additional support.

## DREAD SECRET: KEEPERS OF THE FEATHER

The Keepers of the Feather were founded by Pyoor Twohundredsummers, a member of the intelligent avian race known as ravenkin. He was obsessed with finding the Holy Symbol of Ravenkind and founded the Keepers when his own people called him mad.

The Keepers of the Feather are headed by Pyoor and Bray Martikova. (Pyoor does not appear in this adventure.) Bray keeps Pyoor out of the limelight, serving as the characters' only point of contact with the Keepers in Barovia. Through rituals taught to him by Pyoor, Bray can change from human form into raven form. Barovian legends refer to such folk as "wereravens," even though Bray and his kin are not lycanthropes.

**Bray Martikova** **Level 5 Leader**
Medium natural humanoid, human (shapechanger)

**HP** 45; **Bloodied** 22; **Healing Surges** 8 — **Initiative** +5
**AC** 20, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 18 — **Perception** +4
**Speed** 6

**Standard Actions**

**Scimitar** (weapon) ✦ At-Will
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d8 + 3 damage, or 1d8 + 11 on a critical hit.

**Sling** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 10/20 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d6 + 5 damage.

**Deadly Distraction** (weapon) ✦ **Encounter**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
*Hit:* 2d8 + 3 damage, or 1d8 + 19 on a critical hit, and until the end of Bray's next turn, the target cannot make opportunity attacks.

**Minor Actions**

**Change Shape** (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* Bray turns into a Tiny raven and gains a fly speed of 8, but cannot attack. His equipment merges with the new form. As a raven, he can converse with crows and ravens as if they shared a common language. Reverting to his true form is a minor action.

**Bolster Ally** (healing) ✦ **2/Encounter**
*Effect:* Close burst 5 (one ally in the burst); the target can spend a healing surge.

**Skills** Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Insight +9, Streetwise +10

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 12 (+3) | **Dex** 16 (+5) | **Wis** 14 (+4) |
| **Con** 13 (+3) | **Int** 11 (+2) | **Cha** 17 (+5) |

**Alignment** lawful good — **Languages** Common, Dwarven, Elven

**Equipment** leather armor, scimitar, sling, 20 stones, silver feather amulet

## Daria Fidatov

**Proprietor, Wolf's Den**

Daria Fidatov is a middle-aged female half-elf with a wolfish grin and a dangerous glint in her eye. Despite appearances, though, she is more interested in keeping to her own business, and she doesn't openly antagonize her patrons or the authorities. Daria is not a native Barovian, but a former adventurer who settled in the village after her party died trying to assault Castle Ravenloft. Daria is a pragmatic, no-nonsense woman, and her somber establishment caters to Barovians of gloomy disposition. She offers strong drink and little food, and allows gambling and other seedier endeavors in her establishment.

If the characters approach Daria for information, she might tell them of some disappearances that have been occurring near the Tser Pool, leading to a quest.

### MINOR QUEST: THE MISSING SMUGGLERS

**5th-level Minor Quest (50 XP/character)**

*Some regular patrons of the Wolf's Den have gone missing. One of them was Yuri Dzarkov, a slick hustler who wore a distinctive red leather eyepatch with an expensive-looking black gem set into it. He and several others were last seen heading to the Vistani camp by the Tser Falls. You might want to look into it.*

Several of Daria's patrons, who dealt in smuggling and black market transactions, have gone missing during late-night dealings by the Tser Pool. They met untimely ends at the hands of Yera and her ghouls in area C. The characters complete this quest by finding Yuri Dzarkov's eyepatch.

## Parpol "Parriwimple" Cantemir

**Member of the Militia**

Parpol is a well-meaning, if not terribly bright, young man. He has been a friend of deputy burgomaster Ismark Indirovich since they were kids, and they have grown to view each other as surrogate brothers. Most of the time, Parpol meekly defers to his uncle Bildrath's authority, having been raised by the overbearing merchant. Even as a grown man, he still goes by his childhood nickname "Parriwimple," which Bildrath uses to diminish Parpol's self-esteem. Still, Bildrath's age seems to be catching up with him, and Parpol has taken over the running of his uncle's general store. Through Bray Martikova's influence, Parpol also joined the town militia, where he serves as Bray's second-in-command.

If the heroes take on the quest to end the depredations on Barovia, Parpol volunteers to accompany them, asking for a standard share of treasure to be donated to the families that suffered from the attacks.

Parpol knows that his uncle has secret dealings with the Vistani and buys potions from them whenever he wants to travel abroad; however, he shares this information only with people he trusts, and then only if the characters are desperate to escape the evil mists surrounding the village of Barovia.

If the characters require assistance to complete a quest, Bray might draft Parpol to help them, in which case he joins the party as a companion character.

| **Parpol "Parriwimple" Cantemir** | | **Level 4 Defender** |
|---|---|---|
| Medium natural humanoid, human | | |
| **HP** 45; **Bloodied** 22; **Healing Surges** 10 | | **Initiative** +4 |
| **AC** 21, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16 | | **Perception** +2 |
| **Speed** 5 | | |
| STANDARD ACTIONS | | |
| ⊕ **Greatsword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC | | |
| *Hit:* 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of Parpol's next turn. | | |
| ⊕ **Crossbow** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 20 (one creature); +11 vs. AC | | |
| *Hit:* 1d8 + 4 damage. | | |
| ⸸ **Powerful Strike** (weapon) ✦ **Encounter** | | |
| Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC | | |
| *Hit:* 2d10 + 5 damage, and the target falls prone. | | |
| TRIGGERED ACTIONS | | |
| ⸸ **Interceding Strike** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will** | | |
| *Trigger:* An enemy marked by Parpol makes an attack that doesn't include him as a target. | | |
| *Effect (Immediate Interrupt):* Parpol uses *greatsword* against the triggering enemy. | | |
| **Skills** Athletics +10, Endurance +8 | | |
| **Str** 16 (+5) | **Dex** 14 (+4) | **Wis** 10 (+2) |
| **Con** 13 (+3) | **Int** 8 (+1) | **Cha** 11 (+2) |
| **Alignment** good | **Languages** Common | |
| **Equipment** chainmail, greatsword, crossbow, 20 bolts | | |

# Locations in Barovia

This section describes key locations in the village. If you're fleshing out locations, remember that at least half of the buildings are deserted, particularly those closer to the Ivlis Marsh.

An inset map of the village appears on page XX. The following encounters are keyed to that map.

## E1. Blood o' the Vine

*This large, two-story building of whitewashed stone is decorated with dark woodwork that gives it a warm, rustic quality contrasting with the many abandoned buildings around town. A carved wooden sign next to the ivy-covered entrance reads "Blood o' the Vine."*

The Blood serves as the center of village life. Half of the ground floor is taken up by the dining room, the other half equally divided among a common bedroom, a dimly lit tavern, and the inn's offices and kitchen. The upper floor has three company rooms, which can house up to ten people each, and four private rooms, which can house up to two people each and connect to a private dining area.

The proprietor of the Blood o' the Vine, Bray Martikova, is described earlier in this section. He's also the appointed sergeant of the local militia. In this role, he reports to the village burgomaster.

## E2. Wolf's Den

*This square stone building boasts narrow windows that let in little light. A cast-iron sign bears a snarling wolf's head.*

This one-story building contains Barovia's seedier tavern, where drinks are cheaper and more plentiful than in the Blood—and also conveniently out of the eyes of the militia captain. Several of the patrons blame Burgomaster Indirovich and the militia for failing to stop the depredations, and they might take matters into their own hands. Feel free to include a roleplaying encounter with angry Barovians; if combats break out, use the Barovian commoner statistics.

For more information on the Wolf's Den, see the description of Daria Fidatov.

## E3. Church

**Roleplaying Encounter or Combat Encounter**
**Level 1 (350 XP)**

*This church lies in obvious disrepair, with broken windows and a ceiling that seems on the verge of collapse. The bell tower leans precariously to the side, and from the looks of it, no bell hangs there anymore. To the side, the church's cemetery fares a bit better, showing signs of timid upkeep.*

No services are conducted here. Only the pious prayers of the occasional priest keep the edifice consecrated. The latest priest is Danovich, who at times seems deranged. He recently lost his son, Doru, and refuses to speak of him.

Although Barovians avoid the church, they do frequent the nearby cemetery, offering prayers to those whose spirits have passed on.

## E4. Burgomaster's House

*This weary-looking mansion sits behind an iron fence.*

Kolyan Indirovich and his son Ismark live here, and both can be found here at most times.

## E5. Bildrath's Mercantile

*The barred windows of this building are covered by heavy curtains. A sign creaks lazily on its hinges, reading "Bildrath's Mercantile."*

The modest shop is managed by Bildrath and his nephew, Parriwimple. Bildrath often deals with the Vistani and often gives them information that might ingratiate him to the count. At times, Bildrath feels

guilt over his secret dealings, and he grows meek and quiet. Conversely, Parriwimple has begun to emerge from his uncle's shadow, even starting to go by his given name, Parpol.

Most common items, including adventuring gear and supplies, can be found here, albeit at 20 percent above the normal price.

**Treasure:** Bildrath recently procured a potion from the Vistani during their last visit, and he hides it under a loose floorboard in his shop. Anyone who imbibes the potion can move freely through the mists surrounding the valley, without being choked or disoriented, for a period of 24 hours. The entire potion must be consumed to be effective. Next to the potion is a locked strongbox containing 25 gp and 75 sp. Bildrath carries the key, but the lock is easily picked (DC 15 Thievery check).

# F. Svalich Woods

**The first time the characters explore the woods during the day, read:**
*The trees press together, limiting your view to a few dozen yards. Coupled with the uneven terrain, you realize that it is very easy to get lost in these woodlands.*

**If the characters are in the woods at night, read:**
*Whatever beauty the Svalich Woods had during the day has been replaced with a tangible gloom. Gray mists roll through the woodlands, and you can't shake the feeling of being observed.*

These ancient woods of aspen, fir, and pine cover most of the areas surrounding Barovia and Vallaki. The ground is rarely level, the trees block out most of the light, and the wolves are hardly the most dangerous thing prowling about. If you want to drive home the dangers of the Svalich Woods, spring the following encounter on characters who linger around the woods for too long.

## Dangers of the Woods

**Combat Encounter Level 5 (1,100 XP)**

A brush with the remnants of Strahd's minions draws the attention of more dangerous predators. There is no preset map for this encounter, which can occur in any stretch of forest.

**Perception DC 15:** The character hears the shuffling footsteps and guttural moans of several creatures (the zombies).

**Perception DC 22:** The character smells the stench of the approaching undead and hears growls coming from farther away (the wolves).

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Monsters:** 8 zombie shamblers, 2 dire wolves, 6 vicious wolves.

**Read:**
*Humanoid figures walk toward you at an uneven pace. At first the mists cloak their forms, but you can now discern that these are walking corpses, coming at you with outstretched arms and intoning a single word: Straaaahd.*

The zombies wander the Svalich Woods in search of easy prey.

The wolves are bold and plentiful under Strahd's reign, often acting as opportunistic scavengers. They trail the roving bands of undead—whose flesh they refuse to eat—and attack living creatures the zombies chance upon.

**Tactics:** The zombies focus on the nearest living creature, mindlessly flailing with their heavy fists.

During the second round of combat, the wolves charge into the battle. A zombie might attack a wolf adjacent to it, if no other target is within reach.

The zombies fight to the death, but the wolves behave as normal for their kind. They flee if both dire wolves are bloodied.

**Development:** Surviving wolves return to the gatehouse of Castle Ravenloft and relay whatever they witnessed to Strahd through his connection with their kind.

| **8 Zombie Shamblers** | **Level 5 Minion Brute** |
|---|---|
| Medium natural animate (undead) | XP 50 each |
| **HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. | **Initiative** +1 |
| **AC** 19, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16 | **Perception** +1 |
| **Speed** 4 | Darkvision |
| **Immune** disease, poison | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Slam** ✦ At-Will | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 8 damage. | |
| **Triggered Actions** | |
| **Deathless Hunger** ✦ **Encounter** | |
| *Trigger:* The zombie is reduced to 0 hit points, but not by a critical hit. | |
| *Effect (No Action):* Roll a d20. On a 15 or higher, the zombie is instead reduced to 1 hit point. | |
| **Str** 18 (+6) **Dex** 8 (+1) **Wis** 8 (+1) | |
| **Con** 15 (+4) **Int** 1 (-3) **Cha** 3 (-2) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** – | |

| 2 Dire Wolves | Level 5 Skirmisher |
|---|---|
| Large natural beast (mount) | XP 200 each |
| **HP** 67; **Bloodied** 33 | **Initiative** +7 |
| **AC** 19, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16 | **Perception** +9 |
| **Speed** 8 | Low-light vision |
| **Traits** | |
| **Pack Harrier** | |
| The wolf gains combat advantage against any enemy adjacent to two or more of the wolf's allies. | |
| **Pack Hunter** (mount) | |
| The wolf's rider has combat advantage against any enemy that is adjacent to one of the rider's allies other than the wolf. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 2d8 + 4 damage, or 3d8 + 4 against a prone target. The target falls prone if the wolf has combat advantage against it. | |
| **Str** 19 (+6) **Dex** 16 (+5) **Wis** 14 (+4) | |
| **Con** 19 (+6) **Int** 5 (-1) **Cha** 11 (+2) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** – | |

| 6 Vicious Wolves | Level 5 Minion Skirmisher |
|---|---|
| Medium natural beast | XP 50 each |
| **HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +7 | |
| **AC** 19, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16 | **Perception** +9 |
| **Speed** 8 | Low-light vision |
| **Traits** | |
| **Pack Harrier** | |
| The wolf gains combat advantage against any enemy adjacent to two or more of the wolf's allies. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Bite** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +10 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 6 damage, or 8 against a prone target. The target falls prone if the wolf has combat advantage against it. | |
| **Str** 19 (+6) **Dex** 16 (+5) **Wis** 14 (+4) | |
| **Con** 19 (+6) **Int** 5 (-1) **Cha** 11 (+2) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** – | |

# G. Ivlis Marsh

**As the characters explore this region, read:**
*A desolate swamp stretches before you, choked with reeds and dotted with skeletal, moss-covered trees. The murky water is remarkably still and of unknown depth.*

As the Ivlis River reaches the lowest part of the Barovian valley, it widens considerably, flooding the low-lying lands and forming a wide, cold marsh, the waters of which are 1d6 feet deep in any given location. Villagers from Barovia have long avoided this part of the valley, even before the rise of Strahd, for it features the drowned ruins of an even older civilization. Now, the Ivlis Marsh harbors a new threat.

## Feasting Goblyns

**Combat Encounter Level 7 (1,700 XP)**

Evil fey have migrated to the Ivlis Marsh, leaving their forlorn homeland behind in search of sentient prey. These ill-tempered miscreants are the source of the nighttime attacks against the village of Barovia. They are called goblyns by Barovians, but scholars and folklorists know them better as spriggans.

There is no preset map for this encounter, which could happen deep in the marsh or on the outskirts of the village. Each night, there is a cumulative 10 percent chance that the spriggans attack one of the outlying buildings in Barovia, hoping to kill a villager and drag the corpse back to their lair.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Monsters:** 4 spriggan thorns, 1 spriggan giantsoul, 1 spriggan witherer.

**When the characters see the spriggans, read:**
*Misshapen, green-skinned creatures stare at you with large, yellow, unblinking eyes. Some clutch weapons, while others advance empty-handed, and all wear iron boots and crimson caps. Their wide mouths seem incapable of containing all of their crooked, sharp teeth.*

This band of goblyns was forced north by a tribe of primal magic-wielding humans far to the south and has taken residence in the ruins that dot the Ivlis Marsh. The spriggans prefer to feast on sentient prey, and they have taken to hunting the villagers of Barovia.

**Treasure:** The spriggans keep grisly trophies from their victims, such as teeth, eyeballs, and ears. One of the ears has an earring worth 30 gp.

**Tactics:** The spriggan thorns close to melee range and use *mark of thorns* against different targets. The giantsoul protects the witherer.

If both the giantsoul and the witherer are killed or knocked unconscious, all remaining spriggan thorns attempt to flee, scattering in different directions.

**4 Spriggan Thorns** **Level 6 Soldier**
Small fey humanoid XP 250 each

**HP** 71; **Bloodied** 35 **Initiative** +7
**AC** 22, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 19 **Perception** +9
**Speed** 5 Low-light vision

**Standard Actions**

**Short Sword** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d6 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

**Mark of Thorns** ✦ **Encounter**
*Effect:* Close burst 5 (one enemy in the burst); until the end of the encounter or the thorn dies, the target cannot make opportunity attacks against the thorn, and the target takes 5 damage at the end of any of its turns during which it did not attack the thorn. In addition, at the start of the target's turn, each of the target's allies adjacent to the target takes 5 damage.

**Minor Actions**

**Drowsing Puncture** ✦ **Recharge** when first bloodied
*Effect:* If the thorn hits with its next *short sword* attack, the target is also dazed until the end of the thorn's next turn and falls prone.

**Triggered Actions**

**Redcap Zeal** ✦ **Encounter**
*Trigger:* The thorn bloodies an enemy or reduces an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer.
*Effect (No Action):* The thorn gains 1d8 + 2 temporary hit points.

**Skills** Athletics +11, Stealth +10
**Str** 17 (+6) **Dex** 15 (+5) **Wis** 12 (+4)
**Con** 15 (+5) **Int** 10 (+3) **Cha** 18 (+7)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Elven
**Equipment** chainmail, iron-shod boots, light shield, short sword

**Spriggan Giantsoul** **Level 8 Brute**
Small fey humanoid XP 350

**HP** 106; **Bloodied** 53 **Initiative** +6
**AC** 20, **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 20 **Perception** +7
**Speed** 6 Low-light vision

**Standard Actions**

**Slam** ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d6 + 8 damage, or 3d6 + 13 while the giantsoul is bloodied.

**Giantsoul Slam** ✦ **Recharge** ⚅ ⚄ ⚃
*Attack:* Melee 2 (one creature); +13 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d6 + 8 damage, and the target falls prone. While the giantsoul is bloodied, the damage increases to 3d6 + 13.

**Triggered Actions**

**Surprise Slam** ✦ **Encounter**
*Trigger:* An enemy within 2 squares of the giantsoul attacks one of the giantsoul's allies.
*Effect (Immediate Interrupt): Giantsoul slam* recharges, and the giantsoul uses it against the triggering enemy.

**Redcap Zeal** ✦ **Encounter**
*Trigger:* The giantsoul bloodies an enemy or reduces an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer.
*Effect (No Action):* The giantsoul gains 1d10 + 3 temporary hit points.

**Skills** Athletics +13, Intimidate +10, Stealth +11
**Str** 18 (+8) **Dex** 15 (+6) **Wis** 17 (+7)
**Con** 16 (+7) **Int** 10 (+4) **Cha** 12 (+5)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Elven
**Equipment** hide armor, iron-shod boots

**Spriggan Witherer** **Level 8 Artillery (Leader)**
Small fey humanoid XP 350

**HP** 70; **Bloodied** 35 **Initiative** +8
**AC** 21, **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 20 **Perception** +10
**Speed** 6 Low-light vision

**Standard Actions**

**Withering Touch** (necrotic) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 2d8 + 7 necrotic damage.

**Sun Scorch** (fire, radiant) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +13 vs. Reflex
*Hit:* 2d6 + 9 fire and radiant damage.

**Flattening Wind** ✦ **Recharge** when first bloodied
*Attack:* Close blast 3 or area burst 3 within 10 (creatures in the blast or burst); +13 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* 2d6 + 9 damage, the target falls prone, and the witherer pushes the target up to 2 squares.

**Blood for the Earth** ✦ **At-Will**
*Requirement:* The witherer must be bloodied.
*Attack:* Area burst 2 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +13 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* 2d6 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).
*Effect:* Each ally in the burst gains 5 temporary hit points.

**Triggered Actions**

**Redcap Zeal** ✦ **Encounter**
*Trigger:* The witherer bloodies an enemy or reduces an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer.
*Effect (No Action):* The witherer gains 1d6 + 3 temporary hit points.

**Skills** Arcana +9, Athletics +10, Stealth +11
**Str** 12 (+5) **Dex** 15 (+6) **Wis** 12 (+5)
**Con** 16 (+7) **Int** 10 (+4) **Cha** 18 (+8)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Elven
**Equipment** leather armor, iron-shod boots

# H. Monastery of the White Sun

**When characters arrive at the monastery, read:**
*After an exhausting trek, you come to a bluff that offers a majestic, if dizzying, view of the valleys and forests of Barovia. Below, several tributaries of the Luna River spread across the valley like a monstrous hand reaching out from the base of Mount Ghakis. Near the point where the "fingers" converge stands a stone monastery with a cemetery and a small orchard nearby. A squat bell tower crowns the edifice.*

The Monastery of the White Sun has been dedicated to the Morninglord for hundreds of years. The building is over five hundred years old, situated along the Luna River with an unobstructed view of the western face of Mount Ghakis.

The monks of the White Sun underwent rigorous physical training to withstand the altitude. This also made them experts in dealing with the sick, and quite a few people came to the monastery's hospice hoping the cold, pure air could help the treatment of many illnesses. Brother Henrik came for other reasons, none of them good.

## Brother Henrik

In truth, "Brother Henrik" is Leo Dilysnia, a Ba'al Verzi assassin who attempted to kill Strahd von Zarovich and seize control of Barovia. Leo orchestrated a massacre during the wedding of Sergei von Zarovich and Tatyana before escaping Strahd's wrath. Fifty years after the bloody wedding, Leo reappeared and was recognized by Lady Lorvinia Wachter, one of Strahd's spies. Strahd captured the assassin, turned him into a vampire, and trapped him in the Wachter family crypt.

Leo eventually escaped the crypt and, in the guise of Brother Henrik, returned to the land of Barovia, killing the last surviving members of the Wachter family before taking refuge in the monastery and turning several of the monks into vampire spawn. The survivors he keeps as a larder.

Leo has the ability to turn into a humanoid amalgam of a vampire bat and his own heraldic beast, the lion. Any humanoid Leo slays with his bite becomes a vampire or a vampire spawn.

## Features of the Monastery

**Ceilings:** The ceilings are 15 feet high and flat except in the chapel (area H3), which has a pitched roof 30 feet high, and the inner courtyard (area H4), which has four open-to-the-sky quadrants.

**Doors:** All doors are made of wood and unlocked. In times of great danger, the outer sets of double doors can be barred shut. Opening barred doors from the outside requires a DC 30 Strength check. The doors can also be smashed open and have AC/Fortitude 20, Reflex 5, and 200 hit points.

**Illumination:** The undead creatures that haunt the monastery have darkvision, so most of the inside areas are unlit. Metal torch sconces set into the walls are either empty or contain burnt torch stubs. Replacement torches can be found in any of the supply rooms (area H12).

## Locations in the Monastery

This section describes key locations in the monastery. You can flesh out the various rooms or add dungeon levels as befits your campaign.

Characters who survey the monastery can see numerous points of entry. The most obvious entrance is the outer courtyard (area H2) leading to the chapel. Two side entrances along the eastern wall lead to areas H5 and H9. Characters can also drop down into the inner courtyard (area H4) from above by climbing the walls and walking across the clay-tiled roof. Small characters can crawl down the chimney into the kitchen (area H8).

### Time of Day

It's a four-mile trek from Vallaki to the monastery, so the characters can match their arrival to a particular time of day or night. Be sure to ask the players when they want their characters to reach the monastery.

The characters might not know it, but the Monastery of the White Sun is infested with vampires. Obviously, if the heroes explore the monastery at night, the vampires will be free to move about outdoors. If they arrive during daylight hours, they have the sun as their ally when they confront Leo Dilysnia in area H4.

The following encounters are keyed to the map on page 70.

## H1. Cemetery

*Dozens of humble tombstones dot this small but well-kept graveyard.*

A few of the graves in this cemetery are communal, holding the bones of dozens of monks.

## H2. Outer Courtyard

*Two rows of hooded statues lead to a set of carved wooden doors that stand ajar. The serene ambience is marred by two pale, robed figures lying before the doors.*

**Perception DC 18:** *Low chanting is audible through the open doors.*

The statues depict robed monks, and the corpses are all that remains of two monks exsanguinated by the vampires in the chapel (area H3). As the characters approach the chapel doors, they see more corpses inside.

Monastery of the White Sun
One square = 5 feet
H1
H2
H3
H4
H5
H6
H7
H8
H9
H10
H11
H12
H12
H12
H12
H13
H14
H15
Open Ceiling
Open Ceiling
Open Ceiling
Open Ceiling
N

# H3. Chapel

**Combat Encounter Level 7 (1,500 XP)**

Leo Dilysnia has turned a handful of White Sun monks into vampire spawn. Their unholy chanting defiles the chapel.

**Light:** Dim light (torches).

**Monsters:** 4 elder vampire spawn, 4 forsaken shells. The vampire spawn stand around the altar. The forsaken shells are disguised as corpses on the chapel floor.

**Read:**

*This great torchlit chapel has a pitched, 30-foot-high ceiling. At the north end, four somber figures in robes chant unholy scripture in unison around an altar. The southern half of the chapel is strewn with pale human corpses dressed in tattered, bloodstained robes.*

**Perception DC 24:** *The skin on one of the corpses begins to twitch.*

The four chanting figures are vampire spawn created by Leo. They are charged with suppressing the power of the altar so that Leo can enter the chapel without fear of taking damage.

The four corpses lying in the middle of the chapel are undead horrors created by Leo. If the characters walk past them, the skin peels from the bodies, and they rise as forsaken shells that attack with surprise. If one or more characters succeeded on the Perception check above, the party is not surprised by the forsaken shells.

**Altar:** The altar is a powerful icon of good that has been defiled by Leo's vampires. As long as the vampires stand adjacent to the altar and chant (a free action), the altar's power is suppressed. If there are no vampire spawn adjacent to the altar, undead creatures that end their turn in the chapel take 10 radiant damage. A DC 15 Religion check reveals the power of the altar.

**4 Elder Vampire Spawn** **Level 10 Minion Soldier**
Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 125 each

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +11
**AC** 26, **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 20 **Perception** +12
**Speed** 7, climb 4 (spider climb) Darkvision
**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic

**Traits**

**Destroyed by Sunlight**
Whenever the vampire starts its turn in direct sunlight, it can take only a single move action during its turn. If it ends that turn in direct sunlight, it turns to ash and is destroyed.

**Standard Actions**

**Claw ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +15 vs. AC
*Hit:* 8 damage, and the vampire grabs the target (escape DC 18) if it does not have a creature grabbed.

**Bite ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the vampire); +15 vs. AC. If the target is dazed, the attack hits automatically.
*Hit:* 10 damage, and the target is dazed until the grab ends.

**Str** 21 (+10) **Dex** 19 (+9) **Wis** 15 (+7)
**Con** 18 (+9) **Int** 9 (+4) **Cha** 12 (+6)
**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common

**Tactics:** The vampire spawn are more concerned about defiling the chapel than engaging in melee. They keep chanting while the forsaken shells try to grab and envelop intruders. If one or more enemies slip past the forsaken shells, two of the vampires break off to attack while the remaining two remain adjacent to the altar.

**4 Forsaken Shells** **Level 6 Skirmisher**
Medium natural animate (undead) XP 250 each

**HP** 70; **Bloodied** 35 **Initiative** +12
**AC** 20, **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 18 **Perception** +5
**Speed** 8, climb 8 Darkvision

**Traits**

**Combat Advantage**
If the shell hits a creature that is granting combat advantage to it, the shell deals 2d6 extra damage.

**Spawn Shell**
When a shell kills a Medium living humanoid creature, the slain creature rises as a free-willed forsaken shell at the start of its creator's next turn.

**Standard Actions**

**Necrotic Slap** (healing, necrotic) **✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +11 vs. AC
*Hit:* 1d6 damage plus 5 necrotic damage, the target is grabbed (escape DC 15) and loses a healing surge, and the shell regains 5 hit points.

**Envelop** (necrotic) **✦ At-Will**
*Requirement:* The shell must have a creature grabbed.
*Effect:* The shell shifts up to 3 squares, and the creature it is grabbing is pulled with it and takes 2d6 + 3 necrotic damage.

**Triggered Actions**

**Flexibility ✦ At-Will**
*Trigger:* The shell is immobilized, restrained, pulled, pushed, or slid.
*Effect (Immediate Interrupt):* The shell makes a saving throw. On a save, the triggering effect is negated.

**Skills** Stealth +15
**Str** 12 (+4) **Dex** 24 (+10) **Wis** 15 (+5)
**Con** 14 (+5) **Int** 14 (+5) **Cha** 13 (+4)
**Alignment** unaligned **Languages** –

# H4. Inner Courtyard

**Combat Encounter Level 9 (2,200 XP)**

Here, the characters confront the old enemy of Strahd von Zarovich: the vampire assassin Leo Dilysnia.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Monsters:** Leo Dilysnia ("Brother Henrik"), 3 death kin skeletons (hidden).

**Read:**

*This open courtyard is divided into quadrants by pillared colonnades. In the middle of the area, beneath a stone dome, stands a fountain with a statue of a raven-winged woman pointing north. The statue's head has broken off and fallen into the fountain's water basin. Kneeling before the headless statue is a robed figure in silent prayer, his face hidden in the shadow of a cowl.*

**Perception DC 25:** *Lurking in the shadows along the edge of the courtyard are four cloaked, skeletal figures clutching daggers.*

The kneeling figure is Leo Dilysnia in the guise of Brother Henrik. He assumes the characters have come to the monastery to destroy him, so he doesn't maintain the Brother Henrik charade for long. He chooses to confront his enemies here because there are plenty of avenues of escape, including through the openings in the roof.

**If Leo is aware of the characters, read:**

*The robed figure rises to his feet and pulls back his hood, revealing the face of a bearded man with piercing red eyes. "My name is Leo Dilysnia. Even Strahd von Zarovich could not destroy me. What makes you think you can do better?"*

Leo buys time for the death kin skeletons to sneak into position. The skeletons are the reanimated remains of Ba'al Verzi assassins whom Leo dug up and brought to the monastery with him. Each skeleton wields a pair of Ba'al Verzi daggers.

**Leo Dilysnia, Vampire  Level 10 Elite Skirmisher**
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger, undead)  XP 1,000

**HP** 212; **Bloodied** 106 — **Initiative** +11
**AC** 24, **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 21 — **Perception** +10
**Speed** 6, climb 4 (spider climb) — Darkvision
**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic
**Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1

**Traits**

**Burned by Sunlight** (radiant)
Whenever Leo starts his turn in direct sunlight, he takes 10 radiant damage.

**Regeneration**
Leo regains 5 hit points whenever he starts his turn and has at least 1 hit point. When Leo takes radiant damage, his regeneration does not function on his next turn.

**Swiftness**
After Leo hits or misses with an attack, he shifts up to 2 squares.

**Standard Actions**

**Dagger** (weapon) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +15 vs. AC
*Hit:* 3d4 + 11 damage.

**Double Attack** ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* Leo uses *dagger* twice.

**Bite** (healing) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one dazed, dominated, stunned, or unconscious creature); +15 vs. AC
*Hit:* 4d10 + 10 damage, and Leo regains 20 hit points.

**Dominating Gaze** (charm) ✦ **Recharge** when no creature is dominated by this power
*Attack:* Ranged 5 (one creature); +15 vs. Will
*Hit:* The target is dominated (save ends).

**Minor Actions**

**Change Shape** (polymorph) ✦ **At-Will** (1/round)
*Effect:* Leo alters his physical form to appear as a gaunt, winged humanoid with leonine and batlike features. In winged form, he gains a fly speed of 8. He remains in winged form until he uses *change shape* to revert to normal form or until he dies, whereupon he reverts to normal form.

**Triggered Actions**

**Counterstrike** ✦ **At-Will**
*Trigger:* An enemy attacks Leo on his turn.
*Effect (Free Action):* Leo uses *dagger* against the triggering enemy.

**Skills** Arcana +12, Bluff +13, Intimidate +13, Religion +12
**Str** 20 (+10) — **Dex** 18 (+9) — **Wis** 11 (+5)
**Con** 18 (+9) — **Int** 14 (+7) — **Cha** 17 (+8)
**Alignment** chaotic evil — **Languages** Common
Equipment dagger, lion pendant

**Fountain:** A successful DC 16 Insight check reveals that the statue is pointing toward Vallaki. Any character who threw at least one coin in Vallaki's fountain gains a +5 bonus to his or her healing surge value while in the courtyard.

**Tactics:** If Leo is encountered here during the day, he avoids starting his turn in direct sunlight. Unless the characters converge on him immediately, he uses *dominating gaze* on the most powerful-looking melee combatant and compels the target to attack or charge another of Leo's enemies. He can sustain the effect as a move action and still shift when making *dagger* attacks. Leo doesn't shy away from melee combat, using *dominating gaze* and *bite* to heal damage as needed. If he is marked by an enemy he doesn't want to fight, Leo uses *counterstrike*.

If reduced to 50 hit points or fewer, Leo spends his action point to escape. If necessary, he uses *change shape* to transform into a winged humanoid, then flies through an opening in the roof. He risks flying into the sunlight, but quickly tries to get back inside the monastery before he's burned to a crisp.

The death kin skeletons emerge from hiding and try to gang up on one enemy at a time, reaping the benefits of their *combat advantage* and *skeletal harmony* traits. They use *death's kin* to spread their damage more evenly among them, ensuring that they stay in the fight as long as possible.

**Treasure:** Leo wears a gold lion pendant with tiny rubies for eyes. It is worth 600 gp. Leo and the death kin skeletons wield Ba'al Verzi daggers, which have curved blades and handles wrapped in black, red, and gold. They are not magical.

| 3 Death Kin Skeletons | Level 9 Lurker |
|---|---|
| Medium natural animate (undead) | XP 400 each |
| **HP** 76; **Bloodied** 38 | **Initiative** +14 |
| **AC** 22, **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 18 | **Perception** +7 |
| **Speed** 8 | Darkvision |
| **Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 5 necrotic; **Vulnerable** 5 radiant | |
| **Traits** | |
| **Combat Advantage** | |
| If the skeleton's melee attack hits a creature that is granting combat advantage to the skeleton, the attack deals 1d6 extra damage. | |
| **Skeletal Harmony** | |
| If the skeleton's melee attack hits a creature that is adjacent to two or more death kin skeletons, the attack deals 1d6 extra damage. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| **Double Dagger** (weapon) ✦ At-Will | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +14 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 3d4 + 10 damage. | |
| **Triggered Actions** | |
| **Death's Kin** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Trigger:* The skeleton takes damage. | |
| *Effect (Free Action):* Close burst 3 (one allied death kin skeleton in the burst); the target takes any amount of the damage instead. | |
| **Skills** Stealth +15 | |
| **Str** 18 (+8) **Dex** 22 (+10) **Wis** 16 (+7) | |
| **Con** 16 (+7) **Int** 7 (+2) **Cha** 3 (+0) | |
| **Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** – | |
| **Equipment** 2 bone daggers | |

# H5. Armory and Barracks

**Combat Encounter Level 8 (1,750 XP)**

The monastery retained the services of a half-dozen guards, most of whom worked out of charity, but these ill-trained warriors quickly fell prey to Leo and now serve him as vampire spawn.

Through magical means, Leo attracted a night-marish beast—a manticore—to the monastery. He keeps his treasured pet in the old armory (the easternmost chamber).

**Light:** None in the barracks; dim light (sputtering torches) in the armory.

**Monsters:** Manticore, 6 elder vampire spawn. The vampires haunt the westernmost chamber, while the manticore occupies the eastern room.

**When the party enters the eastern room, read:**

*The walls of this torchlit room are lined with empty weapon racks, and the floor is littered with overturned armor stands and smashed tables.*

**When the party enters the western room, read:**

*This room contains a dozen sturdy bunk beds, their straw-filled mattresses torn to pieces and strewn across the floor amid a handful of old swords. The stench of death hangs heavy in the air.*

During the day, the manticore sleeps soundly in the middle of the room. It wakes to the sounds of combat in the barracks or banging on the doors. Quiet characters can sneak past it with a DC 23 Stealth check. At night, the manticore is awake and prowls the room, waiting for Leo to let it out to hunt.

The vampire spawn that lair here wear tattered chainmail, but they have forsaken their swords in favor of claws and fangs.

| Manticore | Level 10 Elite Skirmisher |
|---|---|
| Large natural magical beast (mount) | XP 1,000 |
| **HP** 210; **Bloodied** 105 | **Initiative** +12 |
| **AC** 26, **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 22 | **Perception** +13 |
| **Speed** 6, fly 8 | |
| **Saving Throws** +2; **Action Points** 1 | |
| **Traits** | |
| **Guided Sniper** (mount) | |
| If mounted by a friendly rider of 10th level or higher, the manticore gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls with its *spike* and *spike volley* powers. | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| **Claw** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +15 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 3d8 + 5 damage. | |
| **Spike** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Ranged 10 (one creature); +15 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 2d8 + 10 damage. | |
| *Effect:* The manticore shifts up to 3 squares after the attack. | |
| **Manticore's Fury** ✦ **At-Will** | |
| *Effect:* The manticore uses *claw* and *spike*, and can shift 1 square between each attack. | |
| **Spike Volley** ✦ **Recharge** ⚀ ⚁ ⚂ ⚃ | |
| *Attack:* Area burst 1 within 10 (enemies in the burst); +15 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 2d8 + 10 damage. | |
| **Skills** Stealth +15 | |
| **Str** 21 (+10) **Dex** 20 (+10) **Wis** 17 (+8) | |
| **Con** 17 (+8) **Int** 4 (+2) **Cha** 12 (+6) | |
| **Alignment** chaotic evil **Languages** Common | |

**Tactics:** If the manticore hears combat erupt in the barracks, it readies an action to use *spike volley* against the first enemy it sees when the western door is opened. It also uses *spike volley* at any intruders opening the outer doors. In melee combat, it uses *manticore's fury*.

When first bloodied, the manticore tries to flee through the eastern doors and then seeks out Leo.

The vampire spawn are straightforward melee combatants. If combat breaks out in the armory, they come to the manticore's aid.

**6 Elder Vampire Spawn** **Level 10 Minion Soldier**
Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 125 each

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +11
**AC** 26, **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 20 **Perception** +12
**Speed** 7, climb 4 (spider climb) Darkvision
**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic

**Traits**

**Destroyed by Sunlight**
Whenever the vampire starts its turn in direct sunlight, it can take only a single move action during its turn. If it ends that turn in direct sunlight, it turns to ash and is destroyed.

**Standard Actions**

**Claw ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +15 vs. AC
*Hit:* 8 damage, and the vampire grabs the target (escape DC 18) if it does not have a creature grabbed.

**Bite ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the vampire); +15 vs. AC. If the target is dazed, the attack hits automatically.
*Hit:* 10 damage, and the target is dazed until the grab ends.

**Str** 21 (+10) **Dex** 19 (+9) **Wis** 15 (+7)
**Con** 18 (+9) **Int** 9 (+4) **Cha** 12 (+6)

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common

## H6. Guest Chambers

*This large room has many sturdy, clean beds. A small cabinet stands next to each bed. A single door is visible on the far wall.*

This is where visitors to the monastery stay. The cabinets are all locked, but the locks are simple and fragile, requiring a DC 10 Thievery check to open or a DC 12 Strength check to break. All the cabinets are empty at the moment. The eastern door leads to a bathing and dressing room.

## H7. Monk Quarters

*This room has humble beds neatly arranged along the walls. A small desk is next to each bed. A door stands in the middle of the far wall.*

This room serves as the sleeping quarters of the monks. The eastern door leads to their bathing and dressing room.

## H8. Dining Hall and Kitchen

**Combat Encounter Level 1 (500 XP)**

When he took over the monastery, "Brother Henrik" rounded up his fellow monks, including the abbot, and confined them here. The monks are given rations from the larder (area H9) and enough firewood to keep warm. When Leo gets hungry, he visits the kitchen, removes one of the monks, sucks him dry, and disposes of the carcass.

**Light:** Dim (fireplace).
**Monsters:** 4 elder vampire spawn.
**Other Creatures:** 10 White Sun monks.

**When the characters first enter, read:**
*The west end of this room holds two long, wooden dining tables flanked by benches. Suspended from the ceiling above the tables are two wood-framed, iron-bound chandeliers set with half-melted candles. Ropes tied to hooks next to an archway allow the chandeliers to be lowered and raised. Beyond the archway stands an impressive kitchen stocked with cooking implements. A large fireplace dominates the eastern wall. Ten robed humans are huddled next to a small fire, praying quietly.*

**Perception DC 24:** *Clinging to the ceiling like giant spiders are four vampires!*

If a character enters the kitchen by climbing down through the chimney, the monks are startled by the intruder and unintentionally attract the vampires' attention. All the vampires are former monks.

**Tactics:** The vampiric monks cling to the dining hall ceiling and keep their living counterparts from escaping. If the characters fail to notice them, the vampires charge during the surprise round, scuttling down the walls with ease. One of the living monks bravely points up at the ceiling and shouts, "Vampires!" The warning comes too late, however, and the vampires still gain their surprise action.

**Monks:** The monks fervently pray for deliverance. Once they are released, the monks thank the characters profusely and offer to treat their wounds in the monastery's hospital (area H13). The abbot, an elderly, white-bearded man named Father Yevgeni Miroff, offers the characters the treasure in area H11. Use the Barovian commoner statistics to represent the monks, if needed.

**4 Elder Vampire Spawn** **Level 10 Minion Soldier**
Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 125 each

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +11
**AC** 26, **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 20 **Perception** +12
**Speed** 7, climb 4 (spider climb) Darkvision
**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic

**Traits**

**Destroyed by Sunlight**
Whenever the vampire starts its turn in direct sunlight, it can take only a single move action during its turn. If it ends that turn in direct sunlight, it turns to ash and is destroyed.

**Standard Actions**

**Claw ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +15 vs. AC
*Hit:* 8 damage, and the vampire grabs the target (escape DC 18) if it does not have a creature grabbed.

**Bite ✦ At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature grabbed by the vampire); +15 vs. AC. If the target is dazed, the attack hits automatically.
*Hit:* 10 damage, and the target is dazed until the grab ends.

**Str** 21 (+10) **Dex** 19 (+9) **Wis** 15 (+7)
**Con** 18 (+9) **Int** 9 (+4) **Cha** 12 (+6)

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Common

## H9. Main Entry and Larder

**Combat Encounter Level 5 (1,200 XP)**

When the monastery was operational, the monks and their guests would use this main entrance hall to come and go. Standing outside the entry doors are a pair of somber-looking monk statues.

**Light:** None.

**Monsters:** 3 vampiric mists.

**When the characters enter the main hall, read:**
*This hall is choked with cold mist. Two unlit chandeliers crafted from iron and wood dangle from the ceiling by ropes that have been tied off to hooks on the walls.*

**Perception DC 18:** *Within the mist, you see half-formed faces with fangs.*

Three vampiric mists were drawn to the monastery shortly after Leo Dilysnia defiled the chapel. These cruel mists have haunted the vicinity of Luna River for years, but until recently they were held at bay by the consecration magic of the monastery.

As the current master of the monastery, Leo has allowed the vampiric mists to come this far, but they can't enter other areas of the monastery without his permission.

**Tactics:** The vampiric mists attack any living creature that enters the hall, using *shifting mists* to move into flanking positions. Enemies adjacent to the mists cannot spend healing surges because of the creatures' *siphoning presence* aura.

**When someone opens the southern door, read:**
*This stockroom is filled with shelves of fruit, sacks of grain, and other supplies.*

There are enough foodstuffs here to sustain all the surviving monks for two weeks.

## H10. Scriptorium

*A few tall desks dominate this room, with shelves of books lined up against the walls.*

This is where the monks copy and translate holy texts. The books on the shelves cover a vast array of topics, but focus mostly on the history and religions of Barovia.

## H11. Abbot's Quarters

*This spacious room holds a modest bed, a desk, many bookcases, and a bathing tub with clawed feet. Hanging in the middle of the eastern wall is a framed portrait of a young woman with raven-black hair, gentle blue eyes, and noble bearing. The portrait has been slashed and torn to ribbons.*

**Perception DC 18:** *Behind the shredded portrait, set into the wall, is a small iron door.*

Leo Dilysnia has taken the abbot's quarters as his private room. The portrait depicts Ravenovia, wife of Barov von Zarovich and mother of Strahd von Zarovich. She was the Monastery of the White Sun's first patron, and the portrait honors her memory. Leo ruined it with one swipe of his claws.

Set into the wall behind the portrait is a safe 2 feet wide, 2 feet tall, and 2 feet deep. The monastery's treasures and donations are kept here. It used to be locked, but Leo forced the abbot to open it, and it remains unlocked.

**Treasure:** The safe holds a wooden coffer containing 1,000 sp and 350 gp, a +2 *manual of puissant skill* (*Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion*, page 52), and a level 11 *healer's sash* (*Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion*, page 79). You can replace these items with another level 9 item and another level 11 item of your choice.

**3 Vampiric Mists** — **Level 9 Skirmisher**
Medium shadow animate (undead) — XP 400 each

**HP** 85; **Bloodied** 42 — **Initiative** +11
**AC** 23, **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 19 — **Perception** +7
**Speed** 0, fly 5 (altitude limit 2) — Darkvision
**Immune** disease; **Resist** 10 necrotic, 10 psychic; **Vulnerable** 5 radiant

**Traits**

**Siphoning Presence** (necrotic) ✦ **Aura** 1
Enemies can't spend healing surges in the aura. When an enemy ends its turn in the aura, it takes 5 necrotic damage, and the mist gains 5 temporary hit points.

**Insubstantial**
The mist takes half damage from any damage source, except those that deal fire, force, or radiant damage. When it takes fire or radiant damage, it loses this trait until the start of its next turn.

**Mist Form**
The mist can move through openings of any size. It can also enter other creatures' spaces and end its turn there.

**Standard Actions**

**Life Drain** (necrotic) ✦ **At-Will**
*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +12 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* 3d6 + 7 necrotic damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 necrotic until the end of the mist's next turn.

**Wave of Lethargy** (necrotic, psychic) ✦ **Recharge** ⚄ ⁞⁞
*Attack:* Close burst 2 (creatures in the burst); +12 vs. Fortitude
*Hit:* 2d10 + 2 necrotic and psychic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of the mist's next turn.

**Move Actions**

**Shifting Mists** ✦ **At-Will**
*Effect:* The mist shifts up to its speed.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Str** 7 (+2) | **Dex** 21 (+9) | **Wis** 17 (+7) |
| **Con** 20 (+9) | **Int** 5 (+1) | **Cha** 9 (+3) |

**Alignment** evil — **Languages** –

## H12. Supply Room

*This small room is filled with shelves and cabinets.*

These rooms contain medical supplies, dried herbs, fresh linen, cleaning supplies, and all other items necessary for maintaining the monastery and its hospice.

## H13. Hospital

*Six iron-wrought beds with comfortable mattresses line the walls of this room. A plain wooden table in the middle of the room is cluttered with porcelain wash basins, bandage strips, and chamber pots.*

This is where the monks minister to the diseased and the infirm. Nothing of value can be found here.

## H14. Stairs to Bell Tower

*This stairway curls up to the bell tower.*

The monastery's bell tower (not shown on the map) is 15 feet wide and contains a rather small brass bell, to keep its peals from causing avalanches in the vicinity.

## H15. Stairs to Cellar

*This narrow stairway worms its way down toward a warm and musty cellar.*

The monastery's cellar is a 20-foot-square room (not shown on the map) filled with barrels of wine and mead.

# I. Castle Ravenloft

Once per year, burgomasters would drive their carts up to this spot, delivering collected taxes to their lord. For most of Barovia's history, this is as close to Castle Ravenloft as anyone would get.

The drawbridge is currently raised to prevent anyone from disturbing the count. The only time the drawbridge lowers during this adventure is to allow Strahd's horse-drawn coach to leave and seek out the characters (see the "Concluding the Adventure" section). Otherwise, the characters have no easy way to gain an audience with Barovia's darklord.

## The Gatehouse

**Combat Encounter Level 7 (1,550 XP)**

The following encounter takes place just outside the gatehouse of Castle Ravenloft, where the characters encounter some of Strahd von Zarovich's forces.

**Light:** Varies depending on the time of day.

**Monsters:** 2 gargoyles, 10 zombie stranglers. The gargoyles crouch behind battlements atop the gatehouse towers. The zombies lurk inside the towers.

**As the characters approach the gatehouse, read:**
*The air is clammy, and a cold wind brushes past you as you approach Castle Ravenloft. The drawbridge connecting the gatehouse to the castle is raised. A stone ledge juts out over a misty chasm, which plunges to a depth of nearly one thousand feet.*

**Perception DC 24:** *You glimpse movement atop the crumbling gatehouse towers.*

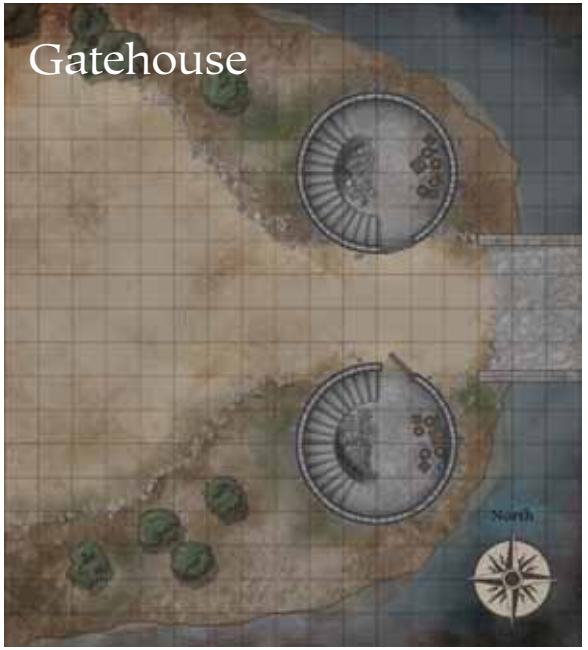
Wooden staircases hug the inside walls of the gatehouse towers and ascend to trapdoors in the rooftops. There's nothing of value inside the towers.

**Tactics:** The gargoyles have instructions to attack intruders who loiter here. If they are not detected, the gargoyles gain surprise as they spring from the rooftops and use *swoop attack*.

Alerted to the sounds of combat, the zombies emerge from the towers and attack the characters. When a zombie strangler drops to 0 hit points, its hands detach from the rest of the body and become animated creatures in their own right.

Every other round, the gargoyles use *stone form* in the hopes that their enemies will engage the zombies while they gain temporary hit points and damage bonuses on their attacks the following round. A gargoyle reduced to 19 hit points or fewer flies back to the castle to recuperate.

**Development:** Strahd won't deign to meet with the characters on their terms, no matter how long they linger here. If the characters insist on camping outside Castle Ravenloft, Strahd sends more gargoyles from the castle and summons wolf packs (similar to the one encountered in area F) to chase them off.




### Exploring Castle Ravenloft

Strahd's home has claimed the lives of countless adventurers over the years, but exploring Castle Ravenloft is beyond the scope of this adventure. Even with the vampire lord's presence, it is a silent, brooding place. You can expand on this adventure by detailing the castle's contents and current occupants. Maps of the castle are readily available online and in an assortment of out-of-print products.

| 2 Gargoyles | Level 9 Lurker |
|---|---|
| Medium elemental humanoid (earth) | XP 400 each |
| **HP** 77; **Bloodied** 38 | **Initiative** +11 |
| **AC** 23, **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 19 | **Perception** +12 |
| **Speed** 6, fly 8 | Darkvision |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Claw ✦ At-Will** | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +14 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 2d6 + 5 damage. | |
| ⸸ **Swoop Attack ✦ At-Will** | |
| *Effect:* The gargoyle flies up to its speed and uses *claw* at the end of the move. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. | |
| **Stone Form ✦ At-Will** | |
| *Effect:* The gargoyle enters *stone form* until it ends the effect as a minor action. While in this form, it gains tremorsense 10 and resist 25 to all damage, gains 5 temporary hit points at the start of each of its turns, and cannot take actions except to end the effect. When the gargoyle ends the effect, it gains a +20 bonus to its next damage roll before the end of its next turn. | |
| **Skills** Stealth +12 | |
| **Str** 21 (+9) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 17 (+7) | |
| **Con** 17 (+7) **Int** 5 (+1) **Cha** 17 (+7) | |
| **Alignment** evil **Languages** Primordial | |

| 10 Zombie Stranglers | Level 7 Minion Brute |
|---|---|
| Medium natural animate (undead) | XP 75 each |
| **HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +2 | |
| **AC** 19, **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 15 | **Perception** +2 |
| **Speed** 4 | Darkvision |
| **Immune** disease, poison | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Slam ✦ At-Will** | |
| *Requirement:* The zombie must have no creature grabbed. | |
| *Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +12 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 8 damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 16) and takes ongoing 8 damage until the grab ends. | |
| **Triggered Actions** | |
| **Crawling Hands ✦ Encounter** | |
| *Trigger:* The zombie drops to 0 hit points. | |
| *Effect (No Action):* The zombie dies. At the start of the zombie's next turn, as long as its corpse remains, zombie strangler hands appear in its space. They act on the zombie's initiative count. | |
| **Str** 16 (+6) **Dex** 9 (+2) **Wis** 9 (+2) | |
| **Con** 12 (+4) **Int** 1 (-2) **Cha** 4 (+0) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** – | |

| Zombie Strangler Hands | Level 7 Minion Brute |
|---|---|
| Tiny natural animate (undead) | |
| **HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion. **Initiative** +2 | |
| **AC** 19, **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 15 | **Perception** +2 |
| **Speed** 4, climb 4 | Tremorsense 10 |
| **Immune** disease, poison | |
| **Standard Actions** | |
| ⊕ **Crushing Grip ✦ At-Will** | |
| *Requirement:* The hands must have no creature grabbed. | |
| *Attack:* Melee 0 (one creature); +12 vs. AC | |
| *Hit:* 8 damage, and the target is grabbed (escape DC 16) and takes ongoing 8 damage until the grab ends. | |
| **Str** 16 (+6) **Dex** 9 (+2) **Wis** 9 (+2) | |
| **Con** 12 (+4) **Int** 1 (-2) **Cha** 4 (+0) | |
| **Alignment** unaligned **Languages** – | |

# Concluding the Adventure

Once Leo Dilysnia is defeated and news of his death reaches the citizens of Vallaki and Barovia, word spreads quickly and eventually reaches the ears of the count. The night after Leo Dilysnia is defeated, the characters receive a strange visit.

## The Black Carriage

**Roleplaying Encounter**

This encounter occurs at night. Strahd arranges for a horse-drawn carriage to see the characters safely from his domain—a courtesy he affords to very few visitors.

**Light:** Dim (moonlight).

**Creature:** Strahd von Zarovich. The count's statistics appear in *Open Grave: Secrets of the Undead*™ (page 210), but they are not needed for this encounter.

**Read:**

*Shortly after sunset, a luxurious coach made of dark wood and decorated in silver filigree pulls up near you, its twin black stallions rearing anxiously. A strong, middle-aged man sits on the driver's seat, holding the reins in his gloved hands. He tips his hat at you.*

*"I am Vasili von Holtz, and I've come at the behest of Count Strahd von Zarovich. His Grace is most pleased with your heroic efforts in ridding Barovia of the assassin, Leo Dilysnia. As a token of thanks, His Grace instructed me to take you to any border of our land, so you may continue on your way, for surely you have somewhere else you wish to be." As Vasili motions for you to enter the coach, the doors seemingly open by themselves.*

"Vasili von Holtz" is actually Strahd von Zarovich masquerading as a mortal servant. The vampire lord is far beyond the characters' ability to defeat at their level. If the characters enter the coach, they are swiftly and

safely transported to any of Barovia's borders before sunrise. Once the characters climb down from the coach, Vasili leaves and returns to Castle Ravenloft.

If the characters refuse the offer, "Vasili" returns to the castle. Their future won't be easy now that they've caught the evil eye of Barovia's darklord.

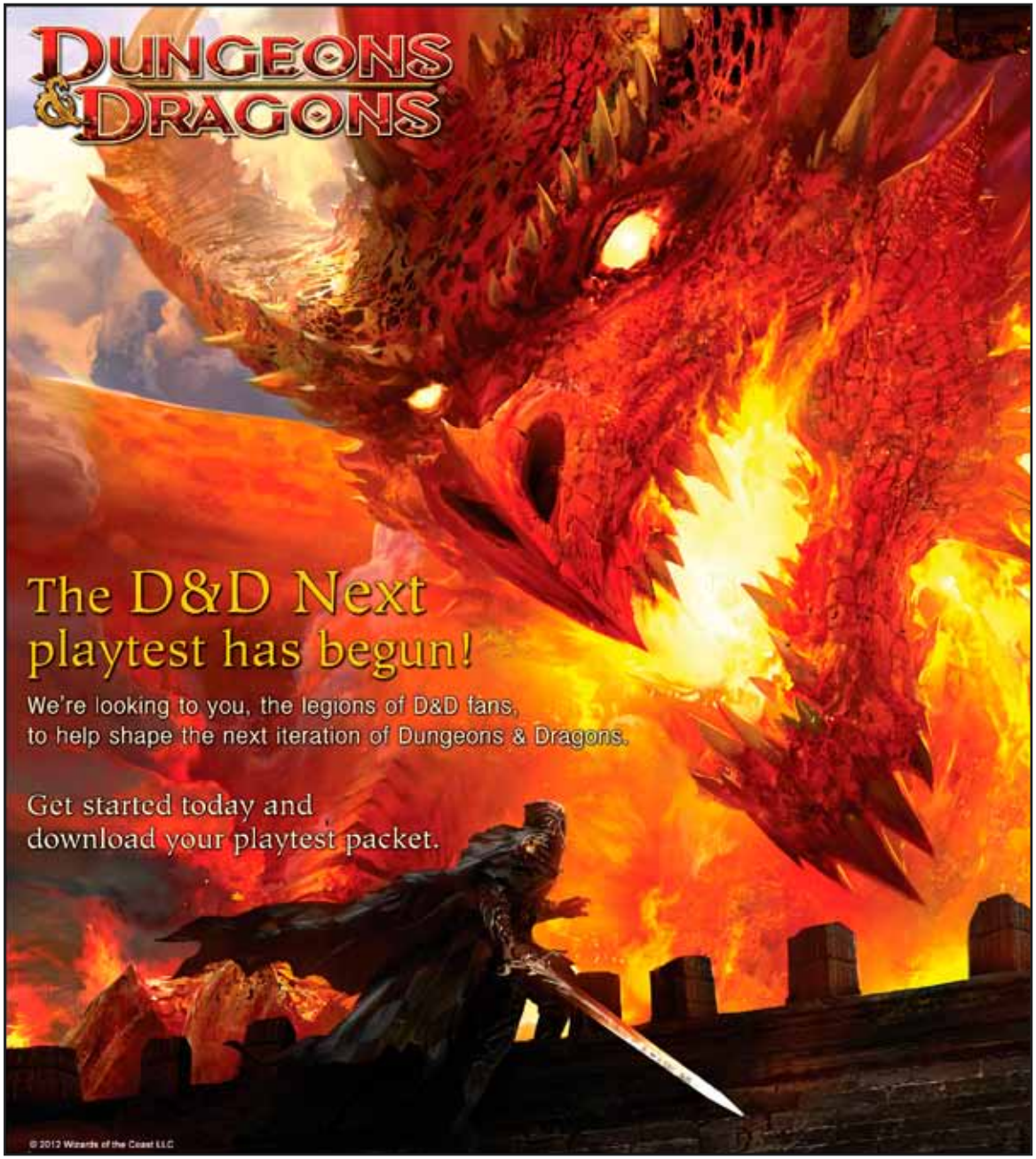
## Further Adventures

Here are a few suggestions for characters who decide to continue adventuring in Barovia.

- Bray Martikova and Parpol Cantemir need the characters' help to hunt down and slay a pack of werewolves lurking in the Svalich Woods. The werewolf leader, Zerena Lukas, is a descendant of the nefarious mercenary Red Lukas. Zerena has come to Barovia in search of Red Lukas's weapon or his remains.
- Some strange creature has been capsizing boats in Lake Zarovich. It could be anything from an aquatic behemoth to a recently awakened aboleth that lairs in an underwater cave.
- The spriggan migration could continue, with more of them being drawn to the ruins that dot the Ivlis Marsh. What sort of prehistoric fiend do the "goblyns" revere in that forsaken place?
- Arabelle might uncover grim tidings of a new dukkar rising in the realm.
- Finally, there is always the possibility of confronting Strahd Von Zarovich himself, as the characters finally brave Castle Ravenloft. Given that Strahd is a level 20 monster, the characters will need more experience (and perhaps a few NPC companions) to survive such an encounter.

### *About the Author*

**Claudio Pozas** is a freelance artist and writer. He lives in Rio de Janeiro with his wife, Paula, his son, Daniel, and their pet dire tiger, Tyler. Claudio's art can be seen at claudiopozas.com.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